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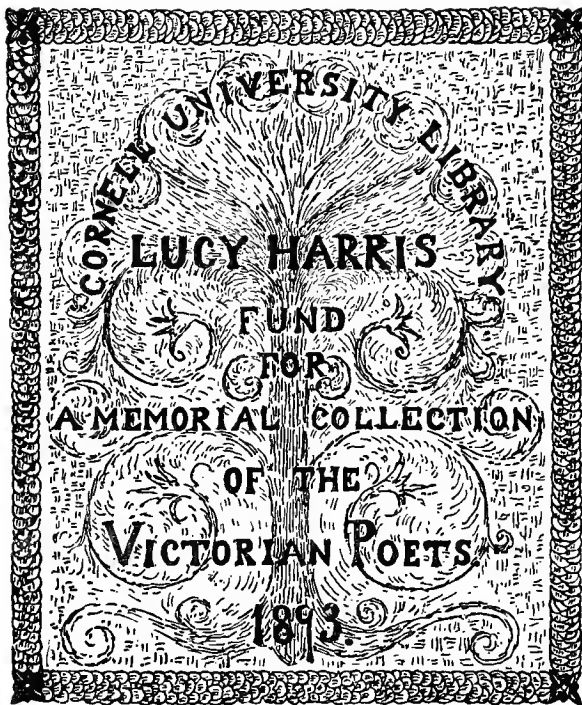
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Yours truly
Wm. H. Hall

P O E M S

HUMOROUS AND PATHETIC

BY

THOMAS HOOD the YOUNGER.

Edited, with a Memoir,
BY HIS SISTER, FRANCES FREELING BRODERIP.



London:
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY.
1877.

To the
Messrs. EDWARD AND GEORGE DALZIEL,
the truest and best of Tom Hood's friends,

This Little Volume

is dedicated,
most gratefully, by

HIS WIDOW AND HIS SISTER.



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THOMAS HOOD THE YOUNGER.

I HAVE been asked to preface this small volume of selected verse by my dear brother, with a slight sketch of his life. The materials are but scanty, the incidents few ; and I can only give them in the simplest form. But as there are many who knew and loved him, I have endeavoured to do the best I can to trace a faint shadow of him, and to show him a little more clearly to those who have not known him. I am afraid it will be but a one-sided portrait—like Queen Elizabeth's, with no shadow on her face—but my readers must take two facts into consideration. First, that a tolerably fair sketch from one point of view was given in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for January 1875, which gives a good idea of his London life ; and that, secondly, as I have lived all my life in the country, I can only speak as to what I know. But as our tastes and sympathies began from babyhood, and we were an exceptionally loving brother and sister, perhaps my few reminiscences of bygone days, may be laid like a few country flowers on his grave.

Thomas Hood, the younger, as he was undoubtedly christened, was at least the third of the name. He was born at Lake House, Wanstead, Essex, on the 19th of January 1835, his birth nearly costing his mother her life. He was christened Thomas, and *not* "Tom," as he believed.

As I wish to clear up the disputed point at once and for ever, I extract a notice published in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for February 1875, which quotes a letter of my brother, addressed to Mr. Bryan, late editor of the "Blackburn Standard," and now of the "Kentish Gazette."

"My father's name was 'Thomas,' he was never called anything else by his friends or nearest relatives, and he never signed anything else. Furthermore, he objected to and disapproved of, being called 'Tom' by the literary gossips of the period. Now my name is, and always has been, Tom. I know it is very wrong, but as I was christened in a punch-bowl—at a time when I was not expected to live—much must be pardoned to an infant who began so badly. I sign my name 'Tom,' partly because it *is* my name, and partly because it is not the trade-mark of Thomas Hood. Let me add, that the publishers knew this so well, that until I was able to 'put my foot down,' they would not let me put my name to my novels as 'Tom Hood.' I would gladly give any money to the man who can show me my father's signature as 'Tom Hood' !

"Yours,—may I say?—TOM HOOD."

My brother was perfectly right in all this, except that he *was* christened "Thomas." But he had always been called

"Tom" from his cradle, and the genial diminutive fitted him like a glove all his life, though I believe he thought himself christened so, and in his jealous tenderness for his father's memory (which he was always on the watch to defend), and from an over-sensitive wish to be utterly responsible for his own work, he persistently distinguished himself by the humbler and more familiar name he so deprecated for his father. It is, therefore, no more than just that, as the last survivor of the "Hoods," I should, while approving and continuing his own adopted title, reinstate him in his original right to that of his father. As I have stated before, I convinced him of this, during the last few months of his life, from my own knowledge, as his elder by four years, and from the conclusive testimony of the old Family Bible in my possession, given by my father to my mother on their wedding-day, which contains in my father's own, beautiful, legible writing, the record of his marriage, and the births and baptisms of his two children. The punch-bowl story is true, for at my brother's birth, he seemed unlikely to survive long, and was therefore hurriedly and privately named with the aid of the old China bowl before mentioned.

My mother has described him in his early babyhood thus:—"My baby is a healthy little creature, and so bronzy with red and brown, that his papa declares at our first party, he shall hold a wax candle. He is as fat and hard as a German sausage, and so merry, you would pick him out, as Dr. Kitchener recommends you to choose lobsters—namely, 'heavy and lively!'

"N.B. Paternal vanity is answerable for the last sentence."

The allusion to the wax candle is an old family joke about a small pair of bronze figures of children holding candlesticks, which were ever after the objects of little Tom's special hatred, as he had been told they were always quiet and never cried. Even at this early age, Tom showed the dark complexion, with very dark hair, eyes and eyelashes that a little later caused him to be dubbed by family friends "Murillo's Beggar Boy."

Mr. C. W. Dilke, the former editor of the "Athenæum," was one of my father's oldest friends, and stood godfather to my brother. In a letter dated Ostende, December 17th 1838, and addressed to Mrs. Dilke, my father thus describes the boy: "Tom has taken to his book *con amore*, and draws, and spells, and tries to write, with all his heart, soul, and strength. He has learned of his own accord to make all the Roman capitals, and labels all his drawings, and inscribes all his properties, TOM HOOD. He is very funny in his designs. The other day he drew an old woman with a book, 'That's a witch, and the book is a life of the devil!' Where this comes from, heaven knows, but how it would have shocked Aunt Betsy! The fact is, he pores and ponders over Retsch's 'Faust,' and 'Hamlet,' and the like, as a child of larger growth. But he is well and jolly, and good tempered as ever, and as he is so inclined to be busy with his little head, we don't urge him, but let him take his own course."

In another letter my father writes of him:—

"Tom gets a very funny boy, with a strange graphic

faculty, whether by a pencil or by his own attitudes and gestures, representing what he sees. I have known boys of six years old untaught, with not so much notion of drawing, and he does it in a dashing, off-hand style that is quite comical."

He was a sunny, sweet-tempered child from his cradle, and always ready for frolic or fun, and quite able to amuse himself. At this time my father and mother resided at Coblenz, on the Rhine; and then—nearly forty years ago—there were only two other English families in the town. However, in spite of strange food and stranger nurses, Tom grew, and thrived, and learned German quicker than his native tongue. In fact, for months afterwards he used to construct his sentences with translations of German idioms, so as to be somewhat enigmatical. This was as rapidly lost as acquired, as certainly in his later years he really understood very little German, and infinitely preferred French. We then left Germany and travelled down the Rhine (it was just before the railroad was finished), and settled again in Belgium, at Ostende. It was during the early part of our residence there that our landlady, who was a great admirer of Tom, wanted to borrow him on the occasion of one of the virgin's fête days. There was a gilded car drawn by two fat Flemish horses, and this was filled by the prettiest children to be obtained, who, robed airily, and with crowns and wings, were to represent angels. My mother's horror may be imagined—she indignantly refused; but I very well remember when we saw the procession pass by our windows, when all the "angels" were struggling together after a

somewhat bellicose and non-angelic fashion, Tom began to be rather sorry he had been left out of the fray!

It must have been somewhere about this time that my father discovered Tom perched up in a high window-seat, and chuckling with laughter over all he could make out of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream." He could only have picked out bits here and there, for, of course, most of it was far above his head; but he evidently made out enough to thoroughly enjoy "Pyramus and Thisbe," and used for long afterwards to personate Bottom the weaver.

Our greatest treats about this period used to consist in a day at the quaint old town of Bruges, where I believe Tom's first ideas of art were awakened. There was no railroad then, and the transit used to be made by an old canal barge, which we considered equal to the Bucentaur, although it certainly travelled at a snail's pace. To our unsophisticated eyes all was delightful, breakfasting as we did at the same "Fleur de Blé" Longfellow has immortalised, and which was a pretty, old, picturesque "Flemish interior" in those days, and then spending all our time in the fine old churches or the two picture galleries. There is a fine collection at the Hospital of St. John, and the famous "Chasse" of St. Ursula was our especial delight. At one time while our father was in England, we spent nearly a week at the dear old hotel in Bruges, and Tom wrote, or rather printed, a very funny note to him, describing all we had seen, and adding the funniest rough sketches of the pictures, culminating in one, which represented the

flaying of some saint, but which Tom practically described as "peeling the man!"

After our return to England, which, from our residence in Germany and Belgium, had become more a *terra incognita* than either, two or three uneventful years passed as far as we were concerned, although during these years my father had made his mark on the literature of the time, in that wonderful poem, Miss Kilmansegg, which was the first popular development of his more serious powers. When, after the death of Theodore Hook, he became the editor of Colburn's "New Monthly Magazine," we removed from Camberwell, our first home, and went to St. John's Wood to reside.

Here Tom was soon placed at a school in the neighbourhood, and began his first course of comparatively more public life. He was very much liked by his masters and his schoolmates, for, though his frisky nature led him into a hundred pranks, they were very innocent ones, and his loving nature made itself known. Here our literary tendencies first manifested themselves, no doubt in imitation of all we saw going on round us. I say "we," which may seem rather egotistical, but we were brought up so much together, and had so much in common, that I cannot help myself. Tom used to cobble up little frocks, and carve tea-cups for my dolls, and I used to play trap bat, cricket, or "Red Indians" with him. Under this new mania, accordingly, we started a magazine, of which we two were editors, contributors, printers, or rather copiers, *and* readers! The "office" was a large packing case turned upside down, at the head of the stairs, with a box for

"letters" hung ostentatiously outside, and a square aperture, where "*the*" single copy of the magazine was proudly displayed. The contents, as far as I can remember, were a thrilling, romantic, and historic story, some feeble attempts at comic copy, and some sentimental verse, which was emphatically "worse!" At all events, we had the unique reward of the universal approval of all its readers—*ourselves*!

And in the middle of these merry times, which were among the few prosperous ones of our dear father's life, his illness which had so long been gathering grew to its height, and the sorrow of our life came upon us, an utterly irreparable loss for his son, whose training and career would have had the benefit of his fatherly care.

It was now time Tom should be placed at some larger school, and after many councils, and much deliberation, my dear mother placed him at the junior school of the London University in Gower Street. Her devoted life, sadly enough for us, closed eighteen months after my father's death; and we became absolute orphans. Under the care of the kind friends who then undertook the charge, Tom was first placed to board with one of the masters of the college, a very forlorn life for a child so used to home-love and care! My mother's loss almost equalled my father's; she was a woman of much mental power, which had been well cultivated, and was the most intelligent companion even my father could desire. With all the calls on her time, and my father's incessant illness—and she was often his amanuensis—it is a mystery to me now, how she found time for us. But our first knowledge of all the best of Shakespeare's plays, most of Scott's novels and poems,

Cooper's Indian novels, Southey's poems, and many others, we first learned by her delightful reading. She imbued us also with her love for the drama, describing to us most vividly her delight in her early days, when she went with her brother (John Hamilton Reynolds, the "Edward Herbert" of the old "London Magazine," and the *collaborateur* of my father in "Odes and Addresses to Great People") to see Edmund Kean, the Kembles, and Mrs. Siddons.

After all these home comforts and pleasures, my poor brother's life must have been rather dreary at first, but he had a very cheerful nature, and was at the elastic age that throws off trouble more easily than in later years. It is only a tiny fact, but "straws show the wind," and as a proof how early his affectionate nature began to show itself, I must record the many pleasures I owed him, during all the dreary time of our great bereavement. As a small boy at school, he was only possessed of the large sum of sixpence a week pocket money, and no schoolboy but could find easy ways of spending twice the sum, and even then, like Oliver, "wanting more!" And yet out of this tiny providing, he used to bring me some dainty trifle each week—only the *few*, very few hours we used to meet—a box of wafers with my name, a couple of sheets of pretty writing paper, and above all a bunch of flowers. We used to spend his one monthly holiday together, either at the British Museum or National Gallery, walking about the whole day; a modest packet of sandwiches forming our dinner; and on any occasion of golden windfalls, spending the whole day at the Zoological Gardens. But in funds or not, his little gifts

never ceased; and I hoard them up now after so many years, and count them as jewels. I shall never see or smell carnations, without the memory coming back, sweet and fresh, of a time when I was recovering from infectious illness, and we had been kept apart for four or five weeks, and at last, after seeing no one but doctor and nurse, I saw my dear boy's kind face as he came in, his hands full of the richly-perfumed flowers.

Meanwhile, during his stay at the London University, his literary tastes broke out again, and in 1851 he became the co-editor with a friend of "The London University College School Miscellany." As the volume was only printed for school circulation, and is not to be had, I quote the opening address of the young editor, then aged sixteen.

TO OUR READERS.

"It is usual in these days to place the preface at the end of a work; but, as this periodical will, like a repeating decimal, be continued to an indefinite number of months, we consider it better to place the preface at the beginning. In the first place, then, be it known to all our readers, that, although this miscellany is edited by a *Hood*, it cannot be expected to cap all other periodicals of the kind.

"And, in the second place, it must be understood that there will be no personalities or scandal, whether it be a true story or a false-*Hood*; for if we admitted anything of this kind, it would have been better to have called this paper a magazine; and, therefore, if the names of Brown, Jones, or Robinson, &c., occurs in the miscellany, it has

no connection with any Brown, Jones, or Robinson living. Again, we proclaim that this is not a political paper; we shall enter into no controversies as to whether Lord John Russell or Henry Russell ought to be Premier.

“ Finally, before launching forth to stem the current of public opinion, we announce to every one, that our ‘Answers to Correspondents’ will not (as in some weakly weeklies) be used for the purpose of giving recipes for tooth powders, or hair dyes, or for the purpose of solving love problems to Toots-like young gentlemen; but to notify to our knights of the pen, whether they are admitted to the lists, or no.

“ After this brief preface, let us leave our juvenile periodical to run alone and speak for itself.”

The second number contains a quaint parody, headed by a characteristic rough woodcut, entitled “Mr. Pips, His Diary,” and chronicling some of the local school doings, such as prize givings, cricket matches, &c. As a specimen

Tom’s earliest versification I quote a few stanzas, not of any value, except as instancing his early sense of melodious rhyme :—

HOPE.

’Mid desert sands the thirsting traveller’s eye
Spies a fresh stream—he struggles on anew—
The mirage fades and leaves him there to die,
Thus we trust Hope, and thus Hope proves untrue.

I had a father once—I think with tears
Of that dear time—as I still older grew,
I thought he would watch o’er my manhood’s years,
Trusting to Hope, and Hope has proved untrue.

My mother loved me ; ah, there was no time
As sweet as that, when hours so quickly flew,
I wished, that she might see me in my prime,
Trusting to Hope, and Hope has proved untrue.

I loved a maid whose beauty none can tell,
With locks of jet, and eyes of brightest blue,
I dreamt too fondly that she loved me well,
Trusting to Hope, and Hope has proved untrue.

I dreamt of honour, nay, I dreamed it mine,
I wished that fame my path with flowers would strew,
I thought my name with fortune's gifts would shine,
Trusting to Hope, and Hope has proved untrue.

I dreamt of wealth, uncounted and untold,
Of riches such as are possessed by few ;
I dreamt of coffers of the brightest gold,
Trusting to Hope, and Hope has proved untrue.

In better worlds thy parents thou may'st see,
The maiden may be won, and honour too,
Riches untold may yet belong to thee,
Then trust to Hope, and Hope shall yet prove true !

About this period it was necessary to decide what his future line of life should be ; he had long been thinking of it, and I daresay I shall surprise many with the fact, that his most ambitious dreams and hopes were to be an artist. And yet evidently his father, no mean judge, had, years before, discovered his tendencies in this way, and I am sure, and have always believed so, that this was his real vocation : but he had received no special training to this end ; and the ordinary courses of drawing lessons, then, not even so good as they are now, had not tended to improve his technical knowledge of the art. That he possessed the true artist's eye for form and harmony of colour, besides

the wealth of imagination which does not always accompany the first two gifts, most of those who knew him could testify. But it was, perhaps, a little late in the day ; and the most kind friends who watched so carefully, and with so much pains and trouble over his training, no doubt shrank from the responsibilities of taking up for him an artist's life, with its wanderings, difficulties, and temptations. The risk was so great, that only his own father would have dared to run it, and he, perhaps, might not ; but I believe myself it is among all those saddest of earth's chances "it might have been !" Meanwhile some drawings of his that had been made, carelessly enough, and with no view of the kind—mere illustrations of some poem or play of the day—were shown to an artist, now long dead, who rightly enough, according to his lights, said they were fair specimens in their way, but there was no originality in them. It is to be regretted that no more crucial test was made of the young aspirant's powers, as I believe his delicate, artistic taste, would with *good* cultivation have borne good fruit. I am not claiming for him the rank of a painter, but I think as a designer on wood, and a water-colour artist, he would have made his mark. His pretty little vignettes and illustrations to several little books, some unluckily out of print now, show what he could do, in spite of want of mechanical knowledge and opportunities for study.

It was now decided he should have a university education ; and with a view to prepare him for this, he was first placed for a couple or three months with a private tutor in lodgings at Blackheath, and after this placed as private pupil under the Rev. C. Badham, D.D., head master of Louth

Grammar School in Lincolnshire, and I believe this was one of the pleasantest parts of his early life. He had always been passionately fond of the country and all its simple pleasures, and his share of it, hitherto, had consisted in his vacations spent with us—at my husband's country parsonage in Somersetshire. Happy days these were, when our school-boy came to us, for my husband was as fond of him as if he had been his younger brother, and in any difference of opinion, as I used to declare, always took his side. Then we used to wander for miles round exploring the pretty nooks and corners; sometimes we all went fishing in the "Decoy ponds," to which we had to walk two or three miles, loaded with luncheon-baskets and fishing-tackle. My husband used at first to take us "short cuts" across country, but as we found these involved fearful fences to climb, and wide rhines to jump over, we were afterwards as shy of them as the fish. Tom and I used to fish, while my husband quietly read, and waited for us; and we used to toil home in the evening, and sup with great glee on those muddy, bony, little roach and dace, and vote them delicious!

Another time we would wander off in search of bee or butterfly orchises to far-off woods, and, as I could not take such long walks, a donkey used to be called in to help. The miseries that poor quadruped endured could not be described—the ditches he was forced to jump, and the hedges to scramble through!—and he "took his fences" with great spirit; but the *stiles*! I have seen Tom on the other side of the stile lift over the unhappy animal's fore-legs, and on this, my husband lifted over his hind legs,

while I sat in the hedge shaking with laughter. Another time we used to go moth or butterfly hunting, going in the day-time to bedaub the trees with some sticky compound, and returning at night with a lantern and net for our prey. We occasionally met with misadventures, as, when once by the seaside we were met by the smart congregation of the neighbouring church, sneaking back ; Tom having his hat covered with butterflies, and his hands full of rare flowers, and I, the guiltiest sinner, with a new kind of frog in one wet hand, and a pocket-handkerchief full of dragon-flies and enormous green grasshoppers in the other ! Such were the occupations of his summer holidays when with us, and in winter—were there not the elaborate church decorations for Christmas, in which his original designs and deft fingers were so apparent, and his frequent wanderings round the village at night with our village band of carol singers.

These were, however, only temporary delights at long intervals, but his residence for some time at Louth was intensely delightful to him ; as his letters used to describe the long walks in search of shells at some far-off fishing-hamlet, and the rambles in woods and pastures looking out for mushrooms to be brought back to Dr. Badham, who was an authority on the subject. Tom always recounted with delight the feasts they used to have on all sorts of odd-looking fungi which the Doctor had pronounced wholesome. There were also sly feasts of another kind in the pupils' parlour, when some of them, having gone to the streams and caught a trout or two by that extraordinary process called "tickling," used to bring them back and cook them before the fire ; a bit of worsted serving as a roasting-jack, and a

large slate for a dripping pan ! When youth is the *chef*, all these banquets, though simple, are appetising enough.

Then he wrote and told me he was very busy indeed, they were going to get up a Latin play, and he was acting manager, scene painter, prompter, and actor, doubling his part moreover. It seemed to have met with great success locally, and the scenes gave great satisfaction.* His companions at that time were, I think, very congenial to him, and he gave himself up with delight in his leisure moments to all his favourite pursuits. His first published poem must have been written during his residence at Louth, for I find him acknowledging it thus in a little volume afterwards, published in 1861, and dedicated to our life-long friend, Mrs. S. C. Hall—

“MY DEAR MRS. HALL,—If you will not allow that a recollection of your friendship, dated as far back as I can remember, is a sufficient reason for my inscribing this book to you, I must ask you to let me do so on the ground that in January, 1853, you inserted in ‘Sharpe’s Magazine’ the first poem of mine that ever appeared in print—and thus introduced me to the public, who have ever since been so kindly disposed to me.—Believe me, my dear Mrs. Hall, yours very truly,

“TOM HOOD.”

His second, which must have been written soon after, appeared in “Household Words,” and was called “The Secret of the Stream,” and is memorable to me for the old affection that cropped up with it. I received by post a wee box, well filled with cotton-wool, containing a pretty gold

* He had great dramatic tastes always, and was most apt at charades ; and in 1867 acted at the Haymarket Theatre, in a burlesque called “Robinson Crusoe,” for a charitable benefit.

strap and buckle ring, with a copy of "Household Words," and a note—

"DEAREST TIB,—With this I send you a little memorial of my first earned money. I have chosen it quite plain,—because, mind, you are not to hoard it,—but to wear it. Your affect.

"TIM."

These were pet names used in our old home, and continued through our lives; my father had always called me Tibbie, why, I don't know, unless it was some jesting old allusion to the ancient Scotch song, "Tibbie Fowler," and this became shortened into "Tib;" while my brother had been dubbed in the same way, "Tim Bobbin."

After his sojourn at Louth, he was entered in the autumn of 1853 as a commoner at Pembroke College, Oxford. Here, as usual, he attracted plenty of acquaintances, not only on account of his name, but for his merry, social disposition. Whether it was about this time, or before, I cannot now trace, but it became understood that he should study with a view to holy orders; he passed all his examinations, though without taking a degree, and certainly endeavoured to bring his mind in accordance with these views for his future; even trying his "prentice han'" at a sermon or two, still in existence, in which the language is very poetical, no doubt; but I am very glad he was saved from that saddest of fates, a mere fashionable preacher. He stayed for a vacation or two with a clerical friend in the neighbourhood to whom he was much attached, but the church was emphatically *not* his vocation, and all who loved him best, and felt most deeply on the subject, must rejoice that at the sacrifice of many advantages, and the

cost of some disapproval, he was honest enough, after a long struggle, to declare his repugnance to it. Surrounded as he was by all the pleasures and temptations of Oxford, it is hardly to be wondered at, that a youth, so endowed, first of all with his father's name, and next with his peculiarly apt, social power of pleasing, should feel that the "narrow way" was not attractive. The honour is due to the conscience that would not engage in such a deadly mistake.

He left Oxford under all this cloud of disappointment, and with the discomfort of also having several claims upon him, which no doubt dearly expiated the folly of entailing them. These, let me say once for all, were fully satisfied a few years after. Meanwhile he went into Cornwall, where he stayed for some time with a dear friend, Mr. Bernard Anstis, at Liskeard, of whose kindness he never ceased to be mindful. Under his guidance, Tom saw a very quaint side of life in the West, among the old miners and "captains," picking up a store of odd knowledge to be made use of afterwards. He was very busy during an election down there, and wrote squibs and addresses with great zest. Under his friend's wing, he made his maiden speeches at mining dinners, and here he also made his debut as a lecturer, in which he was eminently successful. He inherited to the full my mother's special talent for reading aloud, and her musical and well modulated voice. I have often heard him say that, with all his after experience of more cultivated audiences, he never felt so entirely that he carried the minds of his listeners with him as he did when reading "The Poet in the Valley of the Shadow," to

these rough but intelligent Cornishmen in the obscure village of Looe.

And in Liskeard, more important still, he learned his first lesson of practical editorship. The little local newspaper, "The Liskeard Gazette," was the property of Mrs. Matthews, who had lately lost her husband, and who was in some trouble to arrange her journal. With fresh delight and a keen enjoyment in all the petty details, Tom set himself to work, to do his best, sensibly going down to the printing-office and noting carefully every item of the practical work, the A B C of the labour. In after years all his subordinates, notably his printers, were always on the best terms with him, and would take the greatest trouble to please and serve him, and few editors have been so loved, or worked for, as he was. And a good deal of all this he often ascribed to his practical knowledge of his work, gratefully acknowledging his obligation to the little printing-office in remote Cornwall. During his stay here, in 1858 or 1859, I think, his first book appeared ("Pen and Pencil Pictures"), in which the small share the "pencil" had was, no doubt, due to the expense of engraving.

During his stay in Cornwall he made the acquaintance of Lady Molesworth, and was hospitably received at her residence, Pencarrow. He always bore a most grateful recollection of her ladyship's great kindness to a young and untried man; and to her was dedicated a later volume, called "Quips and Cranks." Through her intervention he sent a couple of poems to Thackeray, who was just then starting the "Cornhill Magazine." In a letter to Lady Molesworth about that time, Mr. Thackeray names Tom Hood, and

says that he has inserted the little poem to "Goldenhair," adding, "he is one of the most promising of the young birds who flutter around our 'Cornhill'!"

During his residence in Cornwall, he also made some very clever illustrations to a set of nonsense verses invented by my father for my amusement when a child, and which commenced—

“ ‘ Where are you going to, you little pig? ’
‘ I’m leaving my mother, I’m growing so big ! ’
‘ So big, young pig,
So young and so big,
What ! leaving your mother, you foolish young pig? ’ ”

There was the merest thread of connection in these lines, but Tom was struck with a happy idea, and carried it out most successfully, and it had a good sale. I think his own idea of its great popularity was first awakened by the fact that, calling one day on some friends who were absent, two pretty children came to the door, and stared earnestly at him, while one observed eagerly, "Why, that's the piggy man!"

In the autumn of 1859 my brother came to stay with us to complete with me the "Memorials" of my father, in which we were busily engaged. During his stay he received a telegram, to say that his kind friend was dangerously ill, and he started at once for Liskeard, but reached it only to find Mr. Anstis had died some hours before. This sad event terminated his stay in Cornwall. On the completion of the "Memorials" we went to London to superintend their publication, my dear friend Mrs. S. C. Hall opening her home to me as she has always done, and giving us all the

aid her generous heart could bestow. And during this time my brother's kind friend, Lady Molesworth, exerted all her power on my brother's behalf; and interested the late Sidney Herbert, whose sympathetic, genial help was always accorded to deserving aspirants, and he obtained for Tom a temporary clerkship in the War Office. I should add he was just too old for the permanent staff. His old associates still remember him with kindness; and I may thank here, on behalf of his widow and myself, those old companions, who sent an exquisite wreath to lay on his coffin, a testimony of the old friendly liking which he enjoyed. I have often heard of, but never seen, the quaint caricatures and droll sketches, all made in harmless fun, and enjoyed in a kindred spirit, which used to amuse the leisure of Her Majesty's servants.

That Tom was an industrious worker cannot be denied, for although the best part of the day was swallowed up by his War Office attendance, his nights were also employed; as for instance, in 1860-61, he made drawings for at least four children's books of mine, besides the publication of "The Daughters of King Daher," before mentioned, and a charming set of illustrations to a little book of fables by a friend. He was again enlisted under Mrs. S. C. Hall's banner, and contributed to the "St. James's Magazine." He also published another volume of verse, prose, and woodcuts, dedicated to Lady Molesworth.

In 1862 he became for a short time the editor of a little weekly periodical called "Saturday Night," oddly enough published at 80 Fleet Street, which subsequently became the Publishing Office of "Fun." He numbered among his

friends and contributors, T. W. Robertson, the author of "Caste," &c., Thomas Archer, J. Prowse, W. C. Gilbert, F. C. Burnaud, &c. To this serial he contributed many little poems and sketches, as well as his first novel, which came out later in one volume, "More than kin, less than kind." But there was also an interesting paper which I should like to rescue from obscurity, one of a series, entitled the "Witness of Three." We had both long previously been much interested in the question of capital punishment, and had read with avidity all books tending on the question, regarding it not only as a social mistake, but a legal crime. Accordingly I was not surprised to hear from my brother that he and two others had been present at the execution of Constance Wilson, the notorious poisoner. I have not the letter now, but he wrote that great as was his horror at the sight of all physical suffering, he considered it a duty to witness it once, before giving his testimony against it, and he had therefore arranged with two dear friends to witness the execution, after which, each had recorded his own individual opinion. I don't know what effect it took on the other two "witnesses," but it made poor Tom ill for some time. He was peculiarly sensitive to pain himself, and therefore hated to see it in others, and from childhood would turn pale at the sight of blood. It was therefore by a really conscientious effort that he nerved himself to witness this execution, in order afterwards to testify, as far as in him lay, what was the real moral effect of this "State lesson," which so greatly affected a higher class of mind, and left the great mass it was intended to teach brutally callous and noisily indifferent.

In "Saturday Night," also among other papers, appeared one entitled "Twigs to be Bent," which proved that if he inherited little of his father's talent, he at least imitated him in the pardonable way—namely, in his love for the poor and oppressed, especially children. This little article was as worthy and well stated a plea on behalf of the neglected London street children, as those of more celebrated authors.

The Christmas number of "Saturday Night" was entitled "Half-a-dozen Umbrellas," the articles contributed by T. W. Robertson, A. Halliday, T. Archer, W. J. Prowse, W. B. Rands, F. C. Burnaud, and T. Hood. My brother's editorship came to an untimely end, owing to troubles with the proprietor, and the little society of friends deserted it in a body. As a short specimen of my brother's verse at this time, I insert a few stanzas published then :—

A WORD FOR THE POETS.

Sing, Poet,—sing for the people,—
For each, and for everywhere,—
Like the chimes in the old church steeple,
That summon us all to prayer.

And clothe in a language lowly
The lessons you have to teach :—
Words deep, and pure, and holy,
Are found in the children's speech.

Knock at the hearts of the workers
With a simple earnest song ;—
A song of God's infinite mercy,
And not of man's infinite wrong.

Here's enough of dark and dreary,
In each one's work and life ;
Let the poet's words be cheery,
To strengthen for the strife :—

Aye hopeful, not despairing,
Be the strains that onward urge :
They who march to death in battle
Yet march not to a dirge.

Not a word of grief or repining,
But only of strength and cheer !
For the sun is always shining,
Though the clouds may hide it here.

And your own heart's sadness hidden
Shall find a secret balm ;
And the peace, for others bidden,
Shall bring for you a calm.

What another's sorrows lightens,
Shall steal your kindred care ;
And the lives your glad song brightens
Light yours up unaware.

And when your care has vanished,
Shall deeper joy remain ;
For the heart's ease after sorrow
Is the earth's smell after rain.

In the following years he also worked well, having written three or four charming children's books, as well as another novel, which passed through the Englishwoman's "Domestic Magazine," and was afterwards published under the title, "For Valour." He also edited in a most careful and painstaking way a complete library edition of our father's works, with notes and explanations ; a work that, although it may never become a popular one, I must give my testimony to, as being a faithful and careful edition that may be more valued by posterity.

The brother contributors of "Saturday Night" met again

for three years after, in "The Bunch of Keys," "Rates and Taxes," and "The Fivealls."

In 1865 Tom accepted the editorship of "Fun," to which he had for a long time contributed both with pen and pencil; notably in a series of "Songs for the Throng," which illustrated some of the more serious vicissitudes of life. I am going to speak more of this further on, and so now will only pause to say that he worked "Fun" up from a very low ebb, by painful and conscientious work, to the rank it has now attained. His old comrades still followed him, and fresh and good recruits swelled the ranks. At this time he resigned his temporary clerkship at the War Office, as he found he could not really "serve two masters." I must say that his work was congenial to him, and I believe his ambition thoroughly satisfied; and he set himself to work up the paper perseveringly and with a patient care, that only those who knew him can thoroughly appreciate. With this he combined other work,—three other novels,—"For Valour," "A Lost Link," and "A Golden Heart," first appearing in a Birmingham newspaper, and several magazine sketches, and songs written to music. He had certainly dramatic power too, and wrote a sparkling little piece entitled "Ladybirds' Lovers," as yet unknown.

Mr. Lucy, in his article in the "Gentleman's Magazine," has given a very good description of the "Friday nights" in South Street, which grew out of the consultations over the original "Saturday Night." They were very pleasant, and so fresh that every one left their stiffness and ceremony with their hat or cloak at the door, and came to be amused, and in turn to amuse. Sometimes two or three of the visitors

serenaded outside, like Christy minstrels, and had half-pence thrown out to them, and once or twice "Mrs. Brown"* came with a single knock, and said she had brought the washing home.

The pleasantest and wittiest of chat and gossip must have thrown its charm over a society composed of the old "Saturday nighters," reinforced as they were with so many fresh spirits. Notably among others, Mr. Molloy, whose exquisite whistling to his delightful piano accompaniment, made the first recollection of these evenings memorable to me. Mrs. Tom Hood (my brother married during his War Office days) made these meetings very pleasant, by her kindly welcome, and was popular with all.

In 1866 a great loss came upon me, and my own cares and sorrows, cheered as they were by my dear brother's ready sympathy, kept me occupied away in the West country, and I saw but little of the bright little *ménage*, which in the course of the next year removed to Penge, near Sydenham. The "Friday nights" were then necessarily put aside, owing to the distance from town, and the friends who came down as of old could only do so at longer intervals. But Tom consoled himself with a nice garden, which he laid out and planned till it was really a "thing of beauty," and a host of pets for whom he had now more room. A young peacock which had been given him, bred and reared in the forest near Wanstead; a huge St. Bernard mastiff, another gift; the old Fun cat, born in the office, a magpie, a raven, a sea-gull, now in my possession, some goldfish, &c., and others too numerous to men-

* Mr. Arthur Sketchley, who wrote under the name of Mrs. Brown.

tion,—all these made up a lively menagerie in which he delighted.

In 1868 he published his first “Comic Annual,” with the following address :—

TO THE READER.

“I have made bold in this venture to revive in some sort an old, a familiar, and a popular title; but not, I am assured, in a way that can possibly lead to any confusion between the old and the new publications. I have not done thus much, even, without long deliberation and consultation.

“It has always been my aim to do nothing unworthy of my father’s name, and I do not think I have ever been guilty of endeavouring to associate my efforts with his achievements, or to use his fame as a guarantee for my humble attempts in the field of literature. If I have seemed at any time to imitate his style, I would ask those who think so to remember that it was the school in which I was brought up, and that I have all my life considered him—not unnaturally you may say, if you please—the best model I could copy either in life or literature.

“It was my good fortune a short time since to edit an Annual, of which the public expressed its favourable opinion in an unmistakable form. Now, when I have the opportunity—aided by the same literary and artistic friends who made the former success—to appeal again to the public, I have thought I might not unfairly revive a title, which is a sort of heirloom of mine, to which such co-operation

would, I knew, do no dishonour, and which would at least give me a footing in that world of *Annals* that some *would* seem to claim as exclusive property."

This *Annual* series was continued even up to the last Christmas of his life; for, ill as he was, he managed to edit and write for it, and it was published about a month before his death.

During his residence at Penge, his kindness of heart and ready sympathy made him popular among his neighbours, especially those of the working class. He was an interested visitor and reader at the Penny Readings, and helped in every way in his power towards the getting up of a local flower show; and so much were his genial manner and gentle courtesy appreciated, that on his leaving Penge, the neighbours subscribed and presented him with a very elegant inkstand, accompanied by a dainty workbox for Mrs. Tom Hood.

In 1872 he removed to Peckham Rye, and his wife's health, which had been failing for some years, grew worse, and within three months of their establishment there, she died. The months of anxious watching and grief, coupled with his literary work, told fearfully on my brother, and the shock was a terrible one,—though at first he bore up bravely, went to his work, and even lectured at Croydon on our father's life and works. But all those who have experienced deep sorrows are well aware that it is rarely the first shock that kills;—there is a natural reaction and rally of the mental powers, and we have sympathy and tender care from all, and so the swell carries us on half

stunned half brave; but the real weight, the crushing of the blow, comes after, when the "world" has recognised that we are "resigned." I need not describe to those who have gone through it the torture of this monotonous wash of the waves, this weary toiling on, but it is *then* that love and care is most needed;—the worst of the disease is past perhaps, but it is the question then of life—life renewed,—the tiny spark carefully cherished,—or the quiet and gradual decay that, beginning mentally, saps all the forts of life.

About this time an offer came which I very deeply regret fell through—a proposition that he should go to America and lecture on our father's life and works. He was so eminently fitted for this, and the entire change of scene, the sea voyage and its consequent rest, would have been so good for him, that it is a sore regret that he did not go. His health, broken a long time before by anxiety for his wife's health, borne bravely alone—for the medical men forbade her knowing of any danger—and the broken rest now very seriously affected his health. I stayed with him as long as I could, and afterwards we succeeded in tempting him over to us at Dieppe, nearly once a month. The utter change, the picturesque old town and its pleasant environs, the strange manners, customs, and costumes delighted him, and he used to return wonderfully better for the change. He inherited our father's love for the sea, and was a capital sailor, and the trips did him good, the land of "red night-caps and blue blouses" becoming very pleasant to him.

In 1872 he undertook the direction of a series of papers entitled "Puzzledom," in a magazine for the young entitled

"Good Things." I believe this was one of his last few pleasant labours; ill health and weakness crept gradually on, but his affection for his "Puzzledom Pilgrims," and his painstaking efforts to amuse and instruct them, only ceased with his life. Their little letters and gifts, notably of flowers, were his great delight; and he was as proud of them as if they had been laurel crowns. And his kind little friends have so honoured his grave, by sending their subscriptions to the "Memorial Fund," that I can only compare it to the grave of the music-singer, Walter von der Vogelweide, where the old legend says the birds came to drink and feed. These little human nightingales and robins sang many a song of peace to the weary invalid who loved them so well.

In August 1873 all those who loved him knew that he was going to marry again, and bring once more the cheerful presence of a true woman about his lonely life. Domestic love and care, and constant companionship, were as necessary to him as the common air; the only remaining relic of his married life, his step-son, being away at sea.

We all hoped the brightness and tender care of his wife would prolong the fragile life a little longer, but it was too late; there was left only the last flickering in the socket; and after his return from his brief marriage tour, his health, with all its temporary rallies, became steadily worse; and after Sir William Jenner's most kind visit, we were obliged to reconcile ourselves to the fact that the end was near.

Of these last days the grief is even now too sacred to be dwelt much upon. Suffice it to say, that he bore the knowledge, after the first natural pain, with calmness and resigna-

tion. He employed himself almost to the last in drawing and dictating, till the feeble powers failed at last, and he gave in. He asked to see his friends and bid all farewell, and made all his last arrangements. I cannot dwell upon his last severe sufferings, but on the 20th November, 1874, the sunlit dawn he had been longing for through the dreary night threw its early rays on the white face, set in everlasting peace, and he had

“Another dawn than ours.”

And now my sad task is ended, and I have to the best of my power feebly sketched my dear brother's earlier life. Of course, as I said before, naturally separated so much as we were, I can only give a one-sided glimpse of his earlier days, and yet they were among his brightest and best.

I should like, however, to clear up one mistake. I have heard and seen many statements to the effect, that Tom Hood had been a disappointed man in his literary career, and thought the world had used him somewhat hardly. I might leave it to his own written opinions, but I can also add my own testimony that, apart from the private sorrows and trials which fall to every human lot, he was never for a moment unhappy in that way. His opinion of his own merits is well expressed in the following :—

A POET'S BEQUEATHING.

He did not leave his children wealth untold,
No lofty title and no lordly fee,
No wide estate of corn-land, wood, and wold,
No prosperous argosy upon the sea,

No weighty treasure of ancestral gold,
Nothing that moth or rust corrupt left he.

The mantle of his inspiration fine,
As he ascended, did not fall on them,
Yet, so in his reflected light they shine,
It seems as they had touched the mantle's hem,
For he had won a people's reverence
That grows to love for those he loved, and when
In His appointed time, God took him hence,
Their heritage was in the hearts of men.

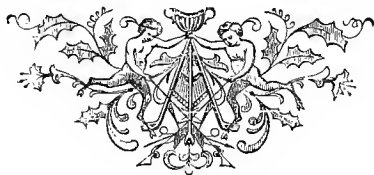
If a tone of melancholy occasionally ran through Tom Hood's writings, it was only from his sense of the deep reality and sadness of some things, even underlying the humorous.

"There's not a string attuned to mirth
But has its chord in melancholy."

And so, like a well-tuned instrument, he had his moods of gaiety and depression, and thus threw himself closely in sympathy with the griefs of others. I may apply to him the words of the late Charles Dickens in his preface to the works of the lamented Adelaide Proctor, that "(he) never fancied himself a great writer, he never thought he was a poet, he never imagined the world neglected him, or that the critics misused him; such unwholesome morbidness was far from him."

I have added some extracts from some of his cheerful letters, remarking, by the way, that no doubt owing to the regularity of his official work during his clerkship at the War Office, he got tired of formality, for none of them were dated, and I could only fix the time as nearly as possible from internal evidence.

I have tried to show Tom Hood, to those who did not know him, as the genial, gentle-hearted, affectionate being, as seen by all who knew him. As one of his contemporaries most truly said, "The most pacific, the most placable, the most 'douce' of the irritable literary race!"





Extracts from Letters.

January 1864.

MY DEAR TIB,—A thousand thanks for the box ; it is very handsome indeed. It arrived on the Friday (on which day I kept my birthday, it being my “coming”), but I have been away from the office for three days “righting up” my study after my Christmas work, so as to have clear decks to commence action with the novel for the Birmingham paper. It will be awfully stiff work, as much wanted every week as —— wants every month ; but I don’t mind that, because it compels me to have a three-volume novel ready for republication in six months, whereas I was nearly two years over “C. M. C.” By the way, if in reading over the latter you saw any gaps that might be judiciously stopped, let me know by return. I’m really grateful for the hint about “I take it ;” one so often gets into mannerism that one does not notice. *Always tell* me at once of anything of the sort. I am half conscious of one or two more, but have to work too fast to be able to look to it.

They are remodelling the ——, and I have just heard I am retained, for which I am really *sorry*. If they turned me off, they’d give me a month’s pay for every year’s service. I should not get such a chance again, and I don’t *want* the office absolutely now, though I don’t like to throw up a cer-

tainty. I can get as much work as I find time to do, if I leave it; and the freedom! oh, can't I understand Charles Lamb's feeling of emancipation! When I come back even after a holiday spent in tidying up, the struggle is fearful. The feeling is growing on me every day, and I know I shall throw up the place in disgust; and if they only sent me off now, I should gain the advantage. God bless. Love to all. Yours, TIM.

I've got the art critic's place on the "Illustrated Times." Nice work, with the run of the Picture Galleries.

January 1864.

DEAR TIB,—Now it's all over, I may as well confess that for the last fortnight I have been very ill indeed, and obliged to go to my friend —, who told me I was all out of order. Thanks to him, however, I'm on my legs again now, and as strong as a horse, and able to get to work again. Don't be "skeered," because I'm better than ever now, and don't intend to run it so hard again, if only because it is a loss instead of a gain in the end. Baby shall have her coloured book the first time I go into the city. Good-bye. God bless. Yours lovingly,

TIM.

February 1864.

DEAR TIB,—All right, I'm getting on swimmingly, am told to eat and drink as much as I can and whatever I like. Thanks, therefore, by anticipation for the fowl and concomitants. H—— is delighted with the libretto. I've told him to copy out the songs and return the book; if he does, I'll send it you to read. Good librettos are very rare, and with my knack of versifying I ought to make a good business of it.

Have you had occasion to try the "Eau sédatif"? It has been a great comfort to me. I had a headache incessantly for nearly a fortnight.

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Dearest Tib, apropos of the Murby collection, I want answers by return of post—1. What is a “Jenny Nettles”? send one or an accurate drawing. 2. Send some real cherry leaves. 3. Some real thistledown (not dandelion). 4. What’s a magpie’s nest like, and where is it built? I am nearly crazy to think of all the work I have to do, and no leave to take. Don’t be alarmed if I lapse into silence, as I’m obliged now to work in all spare time.

S——’s friend need not have been afraid. P—— has no idea of humour, and never pokes fun. If he had the slightest sense of the ludicrous, he would be always laughing at himself, and that would be inconvenient.

I have long meditated a little volume of verse, but I can’t get leave to use the St. James’s poems. Otherwise I would try M——; indeed, I think I shall do so anyhow. But I have no time. I have not done a bit of the burlesque, and I’ve promised a libretto for an opera besides my regular work. I’m not disheartened about my novel; I fancy I can get along with those sort of things, but the verse! When I see what Browning does—oh dear! I can’t get away from town. First of all, since the “row” they are awfully strict, and take it out of your leave if you go out for an hour, so my art work takes up much of my leave. I have only about a fortnight left now for the rest of the year, and they make you keep a week till December.

The hamper arrived all safe; the strawberries were simply magnificent! I walked into them immediately; no such flavour about the ones we buy in London. The ferns are capital, but a little damaged in travelling. They looked very well this morning, though, and seem to take to their new quarters. Kiss the kittens, and tell them how pleased I was with the three nosebags. Was that lime blossom which smelt so sweet the white spikes? If so, please send me a batch in a letter, it

is so lovely. What are the white bell flowers so like orange blossom? I should like to have a root of it.

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August 1864.

DEAR TIB,—I've been meaning to write and tell you to look up all the material for the new edition of the "Memorials"—Miss S——'s letters and notes about the early life, and any additional matter you know of. It would help, too, if you would make a notebook and go over the "Memorials," and wherever anything strikes you, write now a note, quoting page.

We don't want much material, for the book will be an abridgment, but what we want is new and valuable bits of information. As soon as you have done this, let me have the result.

Good-bye. God bless. Love to all.

TIM.

August.

DEAR TIB,—In "Rainbow's Rest," the name of the cottage where the wanderer finds the figurative crock of gold, I am describing the garden, and in the lawn I have made a sunk bed (like those at the Agapemone) filled with bright flowers. It is in shape a semicircle, and the flowers are planted in seven rows of colours, in fact it is like a rainbow—do you see the notion? Well, here are the seven colours of the rainbow. Can you fit them with seven sorts of flowers that would be in bloom about the same time? If so, send by return, as the story waits, and must be finished the end of this week.

You mustn't expect a line from me for some time to come, I am so dreadfully pressed with work. I'll send the tracings of the blocks for the "C. C. C." stories in a day or so. I think of reprinting "Vere Vereker" from the "C. N." Good-bye. God bless. Love to all.

TIM.

P.S.—Just read the “L. S.” story, *capital*!—and will illustrate splendidly, the two over the pudding! I send it off at once. I had quite forgotten the old Crimean medal. *Bravissima!*

September 1864.

DEAR TIE,—Delicious! The peaches! And that melon in lace! And the apples—I know the flavour of some of them! And the “cowcubers” and the marrow! Oh my! it was such a treat. Luckily Scott came in to see me, or cholera must have been the consequence!

Isn't this weather lovely? and I've got over the worst of my work, and feel like lying on my back on the grass. Good-bye. God bless. Love to all. Yours affectionately, TIM.

I send you “Enoch Arden” as a birthday present, with many happy returns of the day, and “God bless.” I hope you'll get it somewhere near your birthday, but as you will have that article on a Sunday, I can't help it.

September 1864.

DEAR TIE,—A thousand thanks for the operetta story; with a few small modifications here and there, to introduce some of our stock music, it will be splendid. It will, I hope, be good enough to be put on the real stage. The notion is fanciful and lively, and, what is more important, novel. The suggestion about the girl's giving up the fisher to the nymph will lead to some pretty writing about the poor immortal, whose flowers and joys all fade, and leave her in melancholy, eternal as herself!

No chance of a holiday. I am rather knocked up just now—haven't been to bed before four or five for nearly a fortnight; but it's all over to-day, and I shall eat lotos lying on my back for a week! And if I can afford it, shall treat myself to a

dinner at quiet little Blackwall, looking out on the Thames, next Sunday. You guessed exactly what I did with the American cucumbers. The melon was exactly ripe—the best I ever tasted. I had no idea you “grewed” it yourself. Do you keep ‘em under glass? I suppose I could grow ‘em on my leads. It was so pretty with its lace-like rind.

I'll see if I can run down for a day or two later in the year. Good-bye. God bless. Love to all. Yours affectionately,
TIM.

October 1864.

DEAR TIB,—Glad the book pleased you. I think it hardly up to his others; and when I see Browning's new book has only just reached a second edition, while this goes like wildfire, I get savage.

By the way, if you have the “Idylls,” I wish you would find me in “Elaine” and copy out, as I want it for quotation, the line about—

“Faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.”

It is where he rejects her love on account of his passion for Guinevere. *Don't forget.*

I send you the libretto, send it on with as little delay as possible. “Wee Maggie” is *very* good. The notion of the sleeping child with the dead mother is lovely, it would make a beautiful picture. I shall show the passage to some artists, it would paint splendidly.

—’s people have written to me for short stories. This is pleasant. There seems lots of work coming in, and I was fearing I should be slack. I'm getting as strong as a horse and as lively as a cricket. Watkins has just done a splendid photo of me, and will send you one. I'm sorry to say the “Osmunda” appears dead; it never throve, having got broken in coming.

I sympathise in the worry of cutting down, and then adding

on, owing to bad casts. I went to awful grief myself in my last instalment of "C. M. C." Going to it at leisure, and writing a smaller hand just after my illness, I wrote more than a column over. Good-bye. Love to all. Kiss the kittens.
Yours, TIM.

December 1864.

DEAR TIB,—I wish you would let me have one of poor old Tip's coats as a pattern for Topsy. She has a continual cough nowadays. Did I tell you I had a new dog, a Pomeranian puppy Scott gave me?—such a stunner, and so clever! She appeared in the "B. O. M." puzzle pages awhile ago, and will figure in "Merry Songs." She and Topsy get on famously, though she's a wee bit boisterous for the old party, who shows fight occasionally. But her wool is very cosy for old Topsy to nestle in in this cold weather. Love to all. Good-bye.
Yours affectionately, TOM.





Poems.

FATE'S FAVOURS.



LAS! that Fate for ever should withhold
Her favours, at the time when most we lack 'em—
Just out of reach suspends the bags of gold,
And only when too late will let us sack 'em
(So would some guardians give to paupers old
Filberts *ad lib.*—when they've no teeth to crack 'em).
In short, the gift of Fate is in reality
Most properly described as a fatality.

So CALVUS, o'er whose head so many years
Had passed, they left it bald as any basin,
An uncle had, who kept, as it appears,
A *coiffeur's* shop some fashionable place in.
Well, CALVUS when his uncle's death he hears,
His legacy the dead man's will would trace in—
And finds the barber leaves his hairless heir
Heaps of pomatum, and a slaughtered bear!

So, too, the hunter who the livelong day,
In tropic climes and very sultry weather,
Ranging the tangled woods in search of prey,
Gets not a glimpse of either fur or feather,

And, disappointed, feels inclined to say,
 " Hang it, I'll give up shooting altogether—
I should not mind had I a peccary shot,
Or if I could a leopard, peppered, pot ! "

When, lo ! the words our friend has barely said
 Before a herd of furious peccaries see him,
And rush to slay him with such anger dread
 That he must bough to it—in fact, they tree him ;
And then he finds a leopard overhead
 Prepared to swallow—just by way of tea—him :—
Whereon he murmured, with no thought of chaff,
That Fate had been too generous—by half !

I knew a man—my story to declare—
 Who oftentimes would bitterly lament him
That he'd no child, no little son and heir :
 But learnt at last his wife would soon present him
With that, for which he'd vexed the Fates in pray'r—
 One boy, he murmured, would full well content him :
When, hapless couple, Fate so hardly bore on 'em,
The wished-for son and heir was—girls ! and " four on
 'em ! "

It was too much to bear ! He ran away
 And left his wife and family behind him,
Who, after searching for him many a day,
 Counted him lost because they couldn't find him.
But he meanwhile was on the salt sea-spray,
 On board a ship where he'd a berth assigned him,
One of those very small berths that a ship lets,—
No fear of quartettes there—or even triplets !

Alas ! upon a rock the vessel struck
And sank—as captain, passengers, and crew did,
Except our friend, who, with his usual luck,
Swam to a rock, though many sharks pursue did !
There, leagues from land, behold our hero stuck
Upon a desert isle, no ship e'er view did,
And he'd saved nought except a cookery-book—
Because he'd nothing in the world to cook !

TRANSPARENCIES.

BY A MAGAZINE POETESS.

IF I were a jelly-fish great and good,
Oh, what a jelly-fish I would be !
But I can't be a jelly-fish e'en if I would,
And so, as a jelly-fish, look not on me.

To float away on the roaming wave
Whithersoever the wave might list,
That is the life that my heart would crave—
That is the spell I could never resist.

To swim, and float, and wander away
To no matter where—and no matter why,
Like yonder pale jelly-fish out in the bay,
That is the sort of existence, say I.

This may be poetry—maybe it's prose—
May be it's—anyhow, this is enough ;
It will pass for a poem as poetry goes—
Jelly-fish fashion—transparentish stuff !



THE HUNTER'S SONG.

I HAVE been where the buffaloes browse,
I have been where the elephant snorts,
I have been where the tiger hunts Indian cows,
Where the lion at midnight resorts.

I have tried a back-fall with a bear,
I have fought with a boa in a coil,
I have strangled the wolf in its terrible lair,
And have managed the panther to foil.

The crocodile, sword-fish, and shark,
The elephant, jaguar, and skunk—
I have killed all of these, I may say, for a lark,
Nor felt (forgive slang!) in a funk.

But here, in my lodgings in town,
I daren't go to bed of a night,
For fear of a beast that is broad, that is brown,
And a terrible beggar to bite.





THE STUDENT OF BONN.

A HIGHLY-SEASONED SENSATIONAL GERMAN ROMANCE.

MEIN Herr Von Schrinn was tall and thin, his mien
was grave and wise,
And a pair of great green spectacles he wore to
shade his eyes ;
His lungs weren't strong ; his hair was long ; he had a brain
of brains ;
But to one sort of learning this scholar discerning devoted
all his pains
And spent all his time upon—
It was Beer—Beer—Beer,
So sparkling, bright, and clear !
Oh ! this young metaphysical, quizzical, phthisical,
bibulous student of Bonn.

A gallon a day he held child's play—a barrel not too big,
For a very capacious throat had he and dearly loved to swig!
But, by my troth, though I am loath, from truth I must not
shrink—
His pastors and masters predicted disasters for one so given
to drink.

But he said to them all, "Begone !
Philosophy, like Beer,
It always should be clear,"
Said this young metaphysical, quizzical, phthisical,
bibulous student of Bonn.

Alas ! at last his health broke fast. They called the
doctors in,
And they prescribed cold-water cure and slops both thick
and thin.
But he shook his head and faintly said, "I can't take water
neat—
Yet tonic drops, with malt and hops decocted, were a treat.
Without it I can't get on !
I swallow nought but Beer,
So foaming bright and clear,"
Said this young metaphysical, quizzical, phthisical,
bibulous student of Bonn.

But every one, that it mustn't be done, protested loud and
long,
And he couldn't bribe the nurse to do a thing so very wrong.
And day after day he faded away, and this—if you would
ask—
Was the latest word of his they heard, "Oh, pray don't
shake the cask !"
And thus reflecting upon
His Beer—Beer—Beer,
He quitted this mortal sphere,
Did this young metaphysical, quizzical, phthisical,
bibulous son of Bonn.



IF.


IF you have dreamt of ocean waves,
 As huge as mountains, wildly dashing ;
 Of sinking ships and seamen's graves ;
 Of thunder's roar and lightning's flashing ;
If you have dreamt you madly clung
 To broken spar or timber shattered,
The fragments of the wreck among,
 By angry surges fiercely battered ;
If you have dreamt you vainly strove
 To reach the shore with wild endeavour,
For time on time the breakers drove
 You, baffled, back and back for ever ;
Till, weakened by despair and fear,
 You longed for death—then, past a question,
My dear young friend, it's very clear
 You suffered much from indigestion !





ODE TO THE SUN.

BY A QUAKER.

HEE dost not well, O sun, to raise thy rays,
The sober day to flout with beams like thine,
Thee putt'st to flight morn's quiet duns and greys,
And so thee mak'st a shine !

Thee com'st so dizen'd out in red and gold,
With garish streamers and a feverish flush ;
Thee seem'st so like a man of battle bold,
The modest streamlets blush !

Thee dost with glory all the heavens so fill,
When like a fiery conqueror thee comes,
As with a cloud of flags and roar of drums !
Thee shouldst be still,
Come sit thee down upon that distant hill,
And twiddle thy two thumbs !





£10,000 PER ANNUM.

IF I had ten thousand a year,
I think I could manage to spend it,
Could squander the half, very near,
And, as for the rest,—I could lend it.

Could squander the half, I should say.
On folly, on vice, and on sorrow,
On dreary debauches to-day,
Repentance and headache to-morrow.

Could purchase with half of my wealth,
Or less, if I cared to diminish,
Bad morals, bad conscience, bad health,
And a bad-ish look-out at the finish.

And the rest of my gold I could lend
The friend who in want had stood by me,
And lose both my money and friend,
For thenceforward for ever he'd shy me !

If I had ten thousand a year,
The sentiment *may* seem clap-trappy,
I'm blest if I think it's so clear
I should not be sick and unhappy.

At present I've friends—very dear—
Health and comfort, as long as I'm thrifty,
So I don't want ten thousand a year,
I'm content with my hundred and fifty.



SPORT TO YOU!

MAN by nature, they say, is a hunter,
His instinct is ever to slay ;
In Hindustan spearing the grunter,
Or bringing the tiger to bay.
In England the partridge and pheasant
He fires at—or grouse on the moor,
But there's one sport's by no means so pleasant—
'Tis driving the wolf from the door!

The Indian despatches the leopard,
The African slays the koodoo,
The boar by Kentuckians is peppered,
The Caffre is nuts on the gnoo,
The Welshman is death on the rabbit,
The French shoot small birds—*c'est le sport!*
My sporting's confined to a habit
Of driving the wolf from the door.

They talk about game laws vexatious,
And growl at a licence on guns :
If there ne'er were worse laws, goodness gracious,
Or taxes more trying as duns,
My lot would not be so distressful—
For I should not pay much on that score ;
For to "pay my shot," were I successful,
I'd soon drive the wolf from the door.



A LETTER OF ADVICE.

WHEN you love—as all men will—
Sing the theme of your devotion,
Sue—and vow—and worship still—
Overflow with deep emotion,
Bow to CUPID's sweet decrees,
Lightly wear the happy fetter,
Bend the knee and plead! But please,
Do not write your love a letter!

Ah! most tempting it may be :
Ink flows free—and pens *will* write,
And your passion fain you'd see
Plainly mapped in black and white.
Yet refrain from shedding ink,
If you can :—'tis wiser—better.
Ere you pen a sentence, think !
Do not write your love a letter.

Hearts may cool, and views may change—
Other scenes may seem inviting,
But a heart can't safely range
If committed 'tis to writing.
What you've written is a writ,
Holds you closely as a debtor.
Will she spare you? Not a bit !
Do not write your love a letter !

Think of Breach of Promise cause,
Think of barristers provoking
Leading you to slips and flaws,
Turning all your love to joking.
If you've written aught, they'll be
Safe to find it as a setter—
Then you'll wish you'd hearkened me—
Do not write your love a letter !

Oh, those letters read in Court !
How the tender things seem stupid !
How deep feeling seems but sport !
How young MOMUS trips up CUPID !
Take my warning then—or soon,
O'er your folly you'll be fretter,
Saying, " Why, poor, foolish spoon,
Did I write my love a letter ? "





FAIRY FANCIES.

I'VE had for fays in every phase,
Since childhood's very early days,
A most romantic passion ;—
For fairies black, and white, and grey—
In short, for every sort of fay,
In every sort of fashion.

When dandled in my nurse's lap,
And just too old to care for pap,
But not for pretty new shoes ;
I lost my heart, oh, many a time,
To fairies named in nursery rhyme—
Bo-peep and Goody Two-shoes.

And when I'd grown a little more
I fell a captive (*atat* four),
And loved a little fairy ;
She was, though—if to fact it comes—
A mortal maid, loved sugar-plums,
And bore the name of Mary.

But older yet, and older grown,
I had a theatre—my own !
A company compacted
With cardboard, tinsel, scissors, paste,
Paint—everything, in short, but taste ;—
And fairy pieces acted.

Should I to paint the love I felt
For characters by PARK and SKELT
Now strive, you'd call me dullard !
But, oh, my heart I lost again
To fairies—price one penny plain,
And only twopence coloured !

Then came at last the golden prime,
When opera and pantomime,
With ballet-nymphs enchanted.
I never doubted cheeks or lips,
Believed that mirth induced their skips—
Ay, took it all for granted !

I loved those fairies—all and each—
Until it was my fate to reach
The age described as "certain ;"
And then I learnt that they were not
As lovely as they painted. What
A peep behind the curtain !


Now up to rouge, and every ruse
Those fascinating fairies use,
I safely plant 'mid snares foot.
Through crow's feet mark my purblind eye,
It still is clear enough to spy
Their cheeks are touched with hare's foot.





A NORSE LEGEND.

WITH A PLAIN COMMENTARY.

 HORSTEIN was a sea-king bold—
What they call a Viking :
(Chaps who suited tastes of old
More than modern liking).

RAGANOK, the ancient Scald,
Thus his history chanted.
(RAGANOK, the bard was bald,
That you took for granted !)

“THORSTEIN,” says this bard, says he,
“On his ship, the *Thunder*,
Hoisted sail, and put to sea,
Bound on war and plunder.

“At the top a pennon grand,
At the prow a dragon,
On the deck—and close at hand—
Stood a well-filled flagon.

“THORSTEIN drank and shouted ‘Skoal !’
‘Skoal !’ with martial hiccup !
Seldom have you, on the whole,
Known a wilder kick-up !

“ He was took with Berserk bad
Sailing o’er the water,
Luckily he no one had
With him there to slaughter.

“ Of the Nisses or the Necks ”—
RAGANOK was muddled
Which it was. Such words perplex
Bards who are befuddled.

“ Anyhow a mermaid rose
While brave Thorstein clamoured,
And with him, as you’ll suppose,
Quickly grew enamoured.

“ Such sweet songs to him sang she,
He no longer tarried—
Sprang at once into the sea,
And that mermaid married ! ”


This was the RAGANOK’s account
Of this happy clearance
(For to that was tantamount
THORSTEIN’s disappearance)—

THORSTEIN’s death the bard has drest
In romantic fiction.
Here’s for those who like it best
In unvarnished diction :

Here the truth then I record
Whereon that was founded—
THORSTEIN tumbled overboard
Topsy, and was drowned !



THE SLEEPLESS.

 HE hour is twelve—the light is out—
The curtains are of dimity,
I nothing have to think about,
To vex my equanimity.

My income is a good round sum ;
My savings well invested are.
My debts to scarce ten pounds would come :
My waistcoats double breasted are.

My nightcap's padded at the ears ;
My slippers are with flannel lined ;
With capon, beef, and wine, and beer's
My alimental channel lined.

The hour is twelve—I've doused the glim—
My curtains draw seclusion in.
But slumber flies both lid and limb—
All sleep I find delusion in.

And, why ? The question you let drop
I answer with veracity—
There's MRS. J. sleeps like a top,
And snores with pertinacity.

I do not rouse her, pretty pet !
I let her sleep away, I do !
Though I don't close my eyes—I get
More rest now than by day I do !



A HISTORY OF CIVILISATION.



H, NOODELYWHANG, of Niddelywhing,
Was king of a naughty nation,
And if you'll listen, I'm going to sing
The tale of his civilisation.

Both he and his people were black as sloes,
For the zone they lived in was torrid,
And their principal clothes were a ring through the nose
And a patch of red paint on the forehead.

Their food consisted of fruits and fish—
Their drink was the limpid rillet ;
Their cookery knew but a single dish,
Which was barbecued enemy's fillet.
And each man might take to him wives a score—
He had nothing to do but to catch 'em ;
And whenever he found they were getting a bore,
He could just take his club and despatch 'em.

They worshipped mere stocks and misshapen blocks—
But their principal idol was copper,
And history states that like fighting-cocks
The priests all lived—which was proper.
But into the bay there sailed one day,
To the people's consternation,
The very first ship that had come that way—
A herald of civilisation.

Tw'as the good ship "William and Jane," of Hull,
And was bound for the far Canaries ;
But the captain somehow had made a mull
On account of the wind's vagaries.
He stayed a fortnight at Niddelywhing,
And accepted the people's caressings ;
Then sailed, but vowed to come back and bring
Them civilisation's blessings.

He returned to Britain, and there you'll guess
His discovery he related,
And at once was elected F.R.G.S.,
And a mighty sensation created.
But he shipped him trousers and crinolines,
A piano, a patent dairy,
Twenty hogsheads of rum, some mustard from KEEN'S,
And also a missionary.

And back he sailed to Niddelywhing,
And reached it late in the autumn,
And he briefly explained to the chiefs and the king
The various blessings he'd brought 'em.
And on shore he sent the reverend gent,
The dairy, the rum, the piano,
And there on the coast he set up a post,
Which stated in Latin that thither he went
In (to make it plain) of KING GEORGE'S reign
The vicesimo something anno.

Then the sailors made love to the monarch's wives,
Who in crinolines soon were adorning,
And all of the people drank rum for their lives,
And had headaches every morning.

They tried the mustard, which proved too strong,
And then their amusements to vary,
They'd daily discourses some six hours long
From that eloquent missionary.

For a month they went on with this sort of thing
In that distant climate torrid,
Till NOODELYWHANG, of Niddelywhing,
Felt existence was growing horrid.
And finding his subjects had also become
Quite tired of this new vagary,
He seized one day on six puncheons of rum
And the reverend missionary.

From what we can gather 'twas his intent
To empty those purloined puncheons,
And he clearly meant that reverend gent
For breakfasts and dinners and luncheons.
But before they began to cook their man,
They partook of their rum so freely,
That the national progress soon began
To be very unsteady and reelly.
Then the captain landed his gallant crew,
And slaughtered the whole of the nation :
Which it seems was his view of what you should do
For the spread of civilisation.





SOFT NOTHINGS.

BY A LOITERER IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE LAUREATE.

SOFT—as the smooth sea, spread o'er level sands ;
Balmy—as breeze that in the bright boughs
breathes ;

Kind—as the kissing touch of kindred hands
When palm with palm enwreathes ;

Warm—as the welcome winnowing of the West ;

Luscious—as labyrinths of lotos bloom ;

Brisk—as the brine that curls the breaker's crest ;

Glad as a gleam in gloom ;

Mild—as the murmur of meandering rill ;

Soft, balmy, kind, warm, sweet, brisk, glad as these,
Illicit whisky from an Irish still—

Or—anything you please !





A TERRIBLE TALE.

WOULD you like from Horrors store a
Tale of death, and wounds, and gore, eh,
In the style of GUSTAVE DORÉ—
DORÉ, when he sups on pork?
Something that your soul shall harrow—
That shall freeze your very marrow!
Till your teeth shall loudly chatter as you faintly murmur,
“lork.”

Till, I say, your teeth shall chatter
With a castanet-like clatter,
As you murmur, “Goodness! lork!”
Clucking like a smart-drawn cork?

Shall it be about a giant,
Of propriety defiant,
On his mere brute strength reliant,
Also great in magic charms?
And about the brave SIR GALAHAD,
Chaunting of his simple ball-a-had,
As he rode along the valley, in his bright and burnished
arms,

As he rode along the valley,
Till the giant made a sally,
At the noise of clashing arms,
Breathing threats of fearful harms?

Then suppose that I should image
How they did each other dîmage
In a most uncommon scrimmage—
'Twas the fashion of the age?
And how GALAHAD when he'd whopped him,
And in twenty pieces chopped him,
Found he'd skivered accidentally both his esquire and his
page.

And it pained him deeply mentally—
Though he'd done it accidentally :
And besides the squire and page,
A cat and blackbird from a cage ?

If you do not prove auspicious —
Call my efforts injudicious—
Get, in short, a little vicious—
And create a phililoo ;
Please to visit the affront on
That there artist, MR. BRUNTON ;
What else could a fellow tell you of the picture he hath
drew ?

What else could a fellow tell you,
Not intending for to sell you—
Though perhaps it seems a do.
'Twasn't me, sir, please ! Boohoo !
Let the artist have his due.





JOPKINS' GHOST.

AN IRREGULAR BALLAD.

YOUNG JOPKINS was a waiter,
A waiter good was he !
One greater—or sedater—
You never sure did see.

He wore a suit of sable—
From Berlin came his glove ;
But he was quite unable
To overcome his love.

He loved a maid called BETTY—
A pleasing damsel too !
So pretty—but coquette-y !
He knew not what to do !
But she to be his love
Declared she would not stoop,
So he dropt a tear—and a Berlin glove—
Into the Mulligatawny soup.

He pined and grew so thin, he
Was scarce fit for his post ;
Like a ninny, he got skinny,
And as pale as any ghost.

His reckoning death was summing,
And that reckoning was his last ;
For though he still said, " Coming,"
He was going very fast.

Till one day on the table,
Dead suddenly he drops !
They were able from a label
To identify his *copse* ;
For, observing he was growing
Much too thin for folks to see,
He affixed a label, showing—
(Twasn't grammar)—" This is me !"

But soon there was a talking
That his ghost was seen at night,
A-walking and a-stalking,
An attenuated sprite !
But when the cock doth crow,
It answers, " Coming—coming !"
Adding, " Youths, be warned, and know
The inconstancy of Wmming !"





A STORY OF SCIENCE.

BY ONE WHO KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT IT.

X PHILOSOPHER sat in his easy chair,
Looking as grave as Milton ;
He wore a solemn and mystic air
As he Canada balsam spilt on
A strip of glass, as a slide to prepare
For a mite taken out of his Stilton.

He took his microscope out of his case,
And settled the focus rightly.
The light thrown back from the mirror's face
Came glimmering upward brightly.
He put the slide with the mite in place,
And fixed on the cover tightly.

He turned the instrument up and down,
Till getting a proper sight, he
Exclaimed—as he gazed with a puzzled frown,
“ Good gracious ! ” and “ Highty tighty !
The sight is enough to alarm the town—
A mite is a monster mighty ! ”

From t'other end of the tube, the mite
Regarded our scientific,—


To its naked eye, as you'll guess, the sight
Of a man was most terrific,
But reversing the microscope, made him quite
The opposite of magnific.

"One sees the truth through this tube so tall,"
Said the mite as it squinted through it ;
"Man is not so wondrously big after all,
If the mite-world only knew it !"

MORAL.

MEM.—Whether a thing is large or small
Depends on the way you view it !

TO AN ANGRY CRITIC.

 O on, my friend, and burst with spite !
Still howl your libels, shriek, and scold !
It's pleasant, when one has to smite,
To learn how well the blow has told.

I laid the thong across your flanks—
A gentle fillip—scarce a touch ;
And lo, you plunge and caper ! Thanks,
I never hoped 'twould sting so much !

You might have lived in quiet too,
Not thus with pain and fury choked ;
But that an idle pen you drew,
And tried to stab me, unprovoked.

E'en for stray curs I pity feel—
Except when one, "for private ends,"
Goes rabid, yelping at my heel ;
Or turns his fangs against my friends ;

For if 'gainst women, children, men,
Your vicious cur begins to range,
True mercy with a pitchfork then
Anticipates the work of mange.

Lie down, sir, in your kennel lie,
And learn an air more frank and blithe ;
Don't snap at harmless passers-by,
Who do not care to see you writhe !

And take a hint :—when lashed again,
Grim Reynard for your model take—
Be mute—and do not let your pain
Be published by the noise you make.





AMANDA IN OUR SQUARE.



F all the girls that are so fair,
There's none like my Amanda :
She lives close by, in Belgrave Square—
The house with a verandah.
There is not in the whole West-End
A damsel who can stand a
Comparison—for Grecian Bend—
With my adored Amanda.

Her pa is partner in a bank,
Whose riches ne'er could *I* count ;
Her ma's a lady high in rank,
The sister of a viscount.
But pa and ma I can't compare
For beauty with Amanda ;
The *belle* who lives in Belgrave Square,
The house with a verandah.

My work I certainly should shun,
Were I not Civil Service,
And so have never toiled or spun,
Like City clerk or Dervise :
But had I work to do, I swear
I'd cut it for Amanda,
Whose mansion is in Belgrave Square,
The house with a verandah.

I sometimes see her in the street,
Or at the Zoo on Sunday :
Each week we on an average meet,
At rout or drum, on one day.
Full dress I go to parties where
I hope to meet Amanda,
Whose gov'nor owns in Belgrave Square
That house with a verandah.

My friends oft ask if I surmise
That I can ever land a
Gigantic matrimonial prize
Like my adored Amanda :
Would she but share my fortunes low,
I'd seek for my Amanda
A villa down in Pimlico—
Perhaps with a verandah !





REAL HISTORY OF ANTHONY ROWLEY.



F Froggy, who'd a wooing go,
The story every one must know ;
How a tremendous jump he took,
Returning home, across a brook ;
And now a duck inclined to sup,
The hapless jumper gobbled up.
The bard of " Froggy," scorning rhyme,
Intended " up " with " brook " to chime !
Now, Dr. Johnson said, the man
Who made a pun would steal a pan !
(So he who steals a penny bun,
Per contra, would commit a pun !)
I think at truth he's no great shakes
Who faulty rhymes (*ut supra*) makes ;
And I believe frog did not die,
And think the poet told a—prevarication !

No ! Froggy, as he homeward went,
On sweet amphibious thoughts intent,
Perceived a large-eyed pensive duck,
That through its coop its head had stuck.
The Duck—(why did the poet ticket
His duck as quite a bird for cricket ?
That game *Anas* objects-to, quite !
How then could he be Lillywhite ?)—

The Duck—excuse that long digression—
Of love for Froggy made confession :
“ You mottled, spotted, lively fellow,
In livery of black and yellow,
I love you ! Pardon me, I do ! ”
Quoth cautious Froggy, “ I love *you* !
Viewed from this spot, your eye and beak
Are lovelier far than croak can speak.”
“ Beak ! ” said the Duck, “ say rather Bill ! ”
Quoth Froggy, courteously, “ I will !—
That is, since to my humble ear,
Bill too familiar would appear,
I call it William ! ” Said the Duck,
“ With your appearance deeply struck,
I would a nearer view enjoy
Of ”——“ I believe you there, my boy,”
The Frog broke-in ; “ but I, ’twixt friends
Like us, consider distance lends
Enchantment (Shakespeare !) to the view ! ”
(It wasn’t Shakespeare, though, he knew !)
With that our Froggy cried “ Adieu ! ”
But he pronounced adieu—a-do.
The Duck, I fancy, thought so too.

MORAL.

Friend, if a stranger some shares in a company
Offers you readily—well ! as a rule,
Money, to purchase them, up if you stump any,
Won’t he just gobble you-up, for a fool,
In this wholly solely Mammon and Sin age
Why, all man’s want tin is only !



A CHRONICLE.



NCE—but no matter when—
There lived—no matter where—
A man, whose name—but then
I need not that declare.

He—well, he had been born,
And so he was alive ;
His age—I details scorn—
Was somethingty and five.

He lived—how many years
I truly can't decide ;
But this one fact appears,
He lived—until he died.

“ He died,” I have averred,
But cannot prove 'twas so.
But that he was interred,
At any rate, I know.

I fancy he'd a son.
I hear he had a wife :—
Perhaps he'd more than one,
I know not, on my life !

But whether he was rich
Or whether he was poor,
Or neither—both—or which,
I cannot say, I'm sure.

I can't recall his name,
Or what he used to do :—
But then—well, such is fame !
'Twill so serve me and you :—

And that is why I thus,
About this unknown man
Would fain create a fuss,
To rescue, if I can,

From dark oblivion's blow,
Some record of his lot :—
But, ah, I do not know
Who—where—when—why—or what ?

MORAL.

In this brief pedigree
A moral we should find—
But what it ought to be
Has quite escaped my mind !





A BALLAD OF BOHEMIA.

EOLEMN city men and spinsters,
Dwelling in Belgravian bowers,
Keep, oh, keep your Kidderminsters
Undeiled by foot of ours.
Call us vagabonds or Chartists—
Any ugly name comes pat—
Call us everything but artists ;
Mind you never call us *that* !

It's an easy thing to judge us,
Yet it seems to me a shame
That your model-folk should grudge us
Both our failings and our fame.
Harping upon faults for ever,
Can't you find a higher prize
Than the epitaph of "Clever !"
When a man of genius dies ?

Our paths are somewhat rougher
Than the paths cut out for you,
And our tradesmen have to suffer
(Which our tradesmen often *do*)—
If occasionally Bacchus
Helps Apollo guide the pen,
You should pity—not attack us,
You untented city men.

If, when mirth and music kindle
What is best in each and all,
We should let the night-hours dwindle
Ere the mirth and music pall—
If our parties never break-up
Till the larks sing overhead,
Why, of course we often wake up
When the lambs are off to bed.

Art, perhaps, may lessen slightly
Our belief in L. S. D.,
But it binds us pretty tightly
In its own freemasonry.
Farewell, city men and spinsters ;
See that never foot of ours
Press the costly Kidderminsters
Of your trim Belgravian bowers.



A GOOD-NATURED MAN.

IF I had been consulted, when
I happened to be born,
My place among my fellow-men
Had been refused with scorn :
For now I find I must enjoy
The life, which I began
At first as kind, good-natured boy,
As kind, good-natured man !

I loved—as every fellow does—
But women treated me
As roses treat the bees that buzz
Around them in their glee ;—
'Twas nice to keep me round about,
Their vanity to fan ;—
And then, it wasn't hard to flout
A kind, good-natured man !

I've not a friend, who wouldn't sell
My friendship any day ;—
And yet all love me passing well,
And like to “ come and stay.”
I toil for every crown I touch ;
But this unselfish clan
Will *his* last twopence share with such
A kind, good-natured man !

Nay ; strangers find me out at once,
And comfortably graze
On one who is a hopeless dunce
In worldly wisdom's ways.
They take my victual from my plate,
My liquor from my can ;—
And I—well, I submit to fate,
A kind, good-natured man !

And yet, at times I seem to feel
There's something somehow wrong ;
Conviction o'er my mind *will* steal
And tell it, 'tis not strong !
Experience teaches in its school
That but a narrow span
Divides from the confounded fool
The kind, good-natured man ! -



THE USURER'S DAUGHTER.



H, Susan the fair is a beautiful maid,
Her pa is embarked in the usuring trade,
His cash he lends out at a ruinous interest,
And his debtors lets neither in summer nor winter
rest.

Young William, the clerk of our Susan's papa,
For Susan he sighs, saying frequently, "Ah!"
But William, alas! is a terrible fright—
A Bill that would not be accepted at sight.

He squints with a pair of odd eyes in his head—
His cheeks they are yellow—his nose it is red—
His mouth has a chronic incipient yawn :—
As safe as the Bank, this account's not o'erdrawn!

So Susan declares, in tones terribly chill,
That she'd far sooner die than she'd make him her Will ;
So he—for his love some return who expects—
Receives but a check that's endorsed "no effects."

And Susan her lovers can count by the score,
Who have told her their passion a thousand times o'er.
But unluckily short these young gentlemen stop
With their pledges of love—for they none of them pop.

The reason of this, I suppose is, they rather
Object to the usuring trade of the father :
They none of them fancy becoming identified
With a father-in-law who's so fifty-per-centified !

For her pa was considered so cruel and bad,
"The Old Gentleman" long as a Nick-name he'd had.
So the lovers, all shying this Lucifer match,
Say they'd go to the deuce ere they'd come to the scratch.

But Time hastens on—does not spare her a bit,
In lines on her forehead the issue is writ !
He plays with her beauty sad havoc, I guess,—
Does such execution as proves a distress !

Poor Susan, most bitter at last is her cup—
She's quite at a discount. She's not taken up,
But gently let down by her lovers. How few—
Care now to put in their appearance to Sue !

At last her papa, SUSAN'S case in a fright about,
His child being (fifty-per)—sent to the right-about ;
And, hoping her heart to her suitor may soften,
Just backs the old Bill she'd dishonoured so often.

So William, forgetting her former denial,
With Common Pleas moves once again for a trial.
As she—as her Will has been proved and found true—
Consents to be his without further ado.

MORAL.

Pas ! Let this catch, while this page you peruse, your
eye—
Never, oh, never be guilty of usury.

Daughters, to this little fact do not blind your eye—
You may say “No” once too often ; so mind your eye.
Lovers, on maidens who fix so intent your eye—
Though they may snub you at first, peradventure,—I
Know they’ll come round if you’ll just wait—a century !

AN EASTERN TALE.

I’VE been told, when a hero you seek for a tale, if
You’re wise you will certainly pitch on a Caliph—
For howe’er you describe him your readers won’t
doubt him,
For folks as a rule know just nothing about him.
So allow me to say—
In a chorusing way—
Ho ! Caliph, Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, li-fal-lay !

The Caliph of Bagdad I choose for my hero,
By name Hassan Agib Ibn-Lilli-burlero,
To a queer sort of title his sponsors condemned him
When they thus by Mohammedan rites “N or M’d” him.
Don’t you fancy that they
Might have christened him, eh ?
As Caliph Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, li-fal-lay !

This Caliph the husband of wives by the score he was :
But got more dissension, united the more he was :
A statement perchance you may deem contradiction—
If you'll marry as often, you'll find it no fiction :

Sympathetic then, pray,
Be your tone as you say
Ri ! Caliph Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, li-fal-lay !

Now he had a particular pet for Sultana,
The queen of the Harem—for rhyme's sake Zenana—
And the elegant name of this dear little pet it was
Maimuna Zuleika—which *Anglicè* Bet it was.

She was fair as the day,
And held absolute sway
O'er Caliph Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, li-fal-lay !

In the breast of the Caliph a spark dwelt of jealousy,
To which of suspicion a breath would prove bellows-y :
And he fancied the black who brought coffee and sherbet
Had somehow contrived by his beauty to stir Bet—

When he saw her eyes stray
To the nigger one day—
Did Caliph Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, li-fal-lay !

Then he called to his Chief of Police (or Bud-washes),
With an oath, for a sack—let's say sackcloth and—dashes.
And at once on the peg, where at bedtime his clothes he
hung,
That unfortunate black by the ring through his nose he
hung.

Like the Moor in the play
Most decidedly cra-
Zy was Caliph Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, i-fal-lay !

So Bet got the sack, and her beau got the bowstring ;
 And his wives he declared he would up in a row string,
 But he'd prove, said the Caliph, to white wife and black
 wife

He was Caliph of Bag-dad—and also of Sack-wife !

 In his jocular way

 He was pleased so to say

Was Caliph Fal-lay, li-fal-lay, li-fal-lay !

THE PHANTOM TRAIN.

LIVE upon a line
 That runs from town to Dover ;
 And o'er it I opine
 There is a phantom rover,
 Which calculations fine
 Is certain to bowl over ;
 When trains will come no soul can guess,
 Because of this wild Boat-Express.

 It puzzles people's brains
 Who travel by the railway,
 It makes the other trains
 Crawl always in a snail-way ;
 And all delays explains
 In one confounded stale way—
 " Train very late to-day, sir ? Yes—
 Ye see, it's that there Boat-Express ! "

You're bound for town at morn—
You hurry to the station,
And have to wait forlorn—
And seek an explanation,
“What hope”—you ask in scorn—
“To reach my destination?”
The porters great regret profess—
“Yes, sir—it's that there Boat-Express!”


At eve—the self-same fate!—
To dine in town invited;
You find your train is late,
Your hope of turtle blighted;
Time flies—and still you wait,
And still the train's not sighted.
The porters the delay confess—
“You see, sir, it's the Boat-Express.”

Be warned then, reader mine,
And if you'd be in clover,
Don't live along a line
That runs from town to Dover,
Where phantom trains combine
To throw arrangements over—
Oh, shun, if you would shun distress,
A railroad with a Boat-Express!





REFLECTIONS.

HE deity, who wished to place
A window in the bosom human,
The works of the machine to trace,
And to his inmost soul to view man—
Did not obtain his wish, we know,
But found that Jove had no objection
To place a mirror there to show
The man himself—upon reflection.

So when one does a silly act,
Or when, alas, one does a bad one,
When one has said what's not the fact,
Or when some crafty knave has had one,
There's sure to come a quiet hour
Devoted to the introspection :
How fain one would resign the power—
But then one doesn't—on reflection.

For charitable deeds at times
Are mirrored as self-glorifying,
And noble deeds show up like crimes,
And jokes look fitting cause for crying.
Self-interest is mirrored where
We sought the face of true affection—
So very often does the fair
Become the foul—upon reflection.

And yet it does us good perchance
To see what faults or follies rule us,
What passions lead us many a dance,
What failings, masked as virtues, fool us.
And yet a man is apt to shirk
The self-inflicted vivisection—
It's not a glass in which you smirk
At your own image—is reflection !

But he who will not face the glass—
Who is at his reflection troubled,
Unshaven morally must pass
With mental chin unduly stubbled.
Or on his figurative nose
A black might light without detection—
Remain a lifetime, I suppose,
Unless he saw it—on reflection.

In short, 'tis very plain we owe
Monitions likely to amend us—
But stop ! Here's a *hiatus*—woh !—
Which *valde* is, I own, *deflendus*.
I see you yawn behind your hat,
I bow at once to the correction !
You're getting sleepy, friend, and that
Upon my verse is—a reflection.





THE REPORT OF A PISTOL.

WAS in a certain era
(The date I've not at hand)
From Britain there did steer a
Brave ship for foreign land—
(The settlement to which it went
Was penal, understand).

A youth, whose name was Pistol,
Was shipped therein as guest,
'Twas said he hailed from Bristol,
A city in the West—
And some assign his "ancient" line
Shakesperian interest.

Acts *contra bonos mores*
Consigned him to that Bay
Which "Botany," *ob flores*
Insignes, christened they ;
Although, you see, he vowed that he
Was innocent as day !

But when she came to anchor
Off Afric's sandy coast,
The bulwarks Pistol slank o'er,
Then swam away, full post,
And 'mid the shore's green sycamores
Evanished like a ghost.

[Now, whether that same vessel
Did onward safely go,
With storms contrived to wrestle
Or took all hands below—
About its end, in short, my friend,
We do not care to know.]

Young Pistol onward blundered
Through swamp and tangled grove,
And he extremely wondered
In such strange spots to rove,
When, lo ! a village with signs of tillage
In sight at last there hove !

Streets, terraces, and villas
Revealed them to his ken—
A town, but by Gorillas
Inhabited, not men !
For those baboons were artful coons
At architecture then.

He felt himself in danger
Among the monstrous apes,
But they upon the stranger
Press roots and nuts and grapes,
And proved themselves well-mannered elves
Despite their hideous shapes.

They called our Pistol “highness,”
And hailed him them among ;
He soon threw off his shyness
And quickly learnt their tongue--
These innocent gorillas bent
On robbing—old and young !



TAKINGS.

HE took her fancy when he came,
He took her hand, he took a kiss,
He took no notice of the shame
That glowed her happy cheek at this.

He took to come of afternoons,
He took an oath he'd ne'er deceive,
He took her master's silver spoons,
And a'ter that he took his leave.



TO A FLAGEOLETIST.

ENCHANTING music ! on mine ear
Too pow'rful far is thine effect.
Come not, oh, art divine, too near—
Pray keep, oh keep, thyself select !
Thine excellence, like yonder star,
Were better worshipped from afar.

Sweet minstrel ! Art thou sad in plight
That thou dost garish day eschew,
That, like the song-bird of the night,
Thou comest thus to Wit to woo ?
Alas ! Wit's penniless, and so
Can't give thee coin—and bid thee go.

Ah, hush ! Too deep for mortal men
The feelings thy staccatos give :
I am compelled to drop my pen,
Yet must I write, if I would live !
Cease, cease that wild bewitching strain—
That I may dream it o'er again !

My nerves, kind friend, are keenly strung—
They need not thine awakening call.
Go, seek the heedless and the young,
Strive their wild natures to enthrall.
Their giddiness the grave condemn—
I do not ! Yet, go thou to them !

Thou wilt not ? Sympathetic soul,
Companionship for grief is good ;
Dark visions o'er my spirit roll ;
My heart is on the beat !—I would
The constable were, too ; that he
Might move thee, as thou movest me.


Another air ? Thou ling'rest yet !
Thou art too fine for this dull earth,
And that thou'rt on it I regret !
A loftier lot would fit thy worth—
Would thou hadst swelled, from childhood's years,
The unheard music of the spheres !



THE FIRST BUTTERFLY.

A DRAWING-ROOM DITTY.

For Music.

 WAS at the opening of the year,
When violets and east winds blow,
And young asparagi appear,
That I walked forth in Rotten Row.
I did not heed the horsemen gay,
That in their gladness cantered by,
For I had wandered forth that day
To note the Spring's first butterfly.
The Spring's first fluttering butterfly,
First foolish, fluttering butterfly;
For I had wandered forth that day
To note the Spring's first butterfly.

Oh, calm the day whereon I strayed,
And tranquil, quiet thoughts were mine;
As peaceful—since no zephyr strayed—
As was the breast of Serpentine!
The sparrow trilled his tender lay—
A simple ditty whistled I;
For I had wandered forth that day
To note the Spring's first butterfly.


The Spring's first fluttering butterfly,
First foolish, fluttering butterfly ;
For I had wandered forth that day
To note the Spring's first butterfly.

Beside the rails that edge the Row,
Where idlers lounge and sparrows perch,
Where dandies canter to and fro,
I met the object of my search—
My beauteous Delia passed that way—
Her crinoline she had laid by !
'Twas all I hoped for ; I, that day,
Thus met with Spring's first butterfly.
The Spring's fair fluttering butterfly,
First fashionable butterfly ;
Sans crinoline, my fair that day
Was Spring's first, fairest butterfly.





A TALE OF THE TROPICS.

ITTI FAL LAY was a lovely maid—
The white of her eye was like marmalade,
Her skin was the blackest of inky blacks,
And her lips were as scarlet as sealing wax.

She wore her hair in a fuzz a-top,
Like a swab (the nautical term for mop) ;
Her ivory teeth were two gleaming rows,
And she carried a skewer in her comely nose.

She loved a sailor (did Titti Fal Lay),
Who had been on that island cast away.
Titti Fal Lay was the child of a king,
But she loved Jack Deadeyes like anything.

She loved Jack Deadeyes ; but—woe is me !—
Jack Deadeyes he wasn't in love with she ;
For he fondly thought of his lovely Nan
(Who lived at Wapping), did that young man.

And so, alas, and alack-a-day !
When an English ship sailed into the bay
(The *Lively Betty*, a seventy-four),
He took a berth in that man-of-war !

Then Titti Fal Lay (her heart was broke)
Wept—but never a word she spoke ;
But she skewered herself did the mournful maid,
On the native weapon, a sword-fish blade.

They buried her under the Bo-bo tree,
With her favourite kitten along o' she ;
And the purple-nosed monkeys sadly rave,
And chew their tails o'er the maiden's grave.



THE SENSES.

BY AN INVALID.

WITH ardent love, though humble,
Art's treasures I exalt :
Impasto, stipple, scumble,
Brown madder, ochre, smalt,
But now by Fate's harsh strictures,
Debarred from all I sigh—
You can't see much of pictures
With leeches on your eye.

I love my country's writings,
The novelist's wild tales,
The essayist's inditings,
The poet's tender wails ;

To read 'twere useless trying—
I cannot hear them read,
There are, as here I'm lying,
Such noises in my head.

For music I've a passion—
Mozart and Bach and Spohr,
For Gounod (who's the fashion),
And twenty thousand more.
But yet—just now, precisely—
Unpleasant do I find 'em,
For ears won't listen nicely
With blisters stuck behind 'em !

I love the taste of peaches,
Of grapes adust with bloom,
For, ah, their flavour reaches
The palate like perfume !
But now? Don't bring me *them* or I
Shall scream ! There's nought can spoil
One's palate like the memory
Of—ugh !—cod liver oil !





LOVE AND RUBBISH.



IN a day when Love's Aurora
 Lighted all the sky of life,
When I fancied that my Flora
 Was to be my wife ;
As a pledge of the confession
 That I read in both her eyes,
Of her glove I took possession—
 Six three-quarter size.

Though of superfine kid leather,
 All the finger-tips were torn ;
And the glove was altogether
 Very old and worn.
In my desk I laid the token—
 In a corner quite apart ;
Emblem of a faith soon broken,
 And a breaking heart.

For I found she loved another,
 And my miseries began ;
She is married and a mother,
 I'm a single man.
Will she think me rude or cubbish
 If I send her back the glove,
Telling her to throw her rubbish
 Where she throws her love ?



THE GHOST AND THE GUILTY FOOTMAN.

JOHN THOMAS was a footman tall,
Who dwelt in Berkeley Square ;
And he wept the loss of Betsy Hall,
Who had been housemaid there.

But death had ruthlessly withdrawn
The maid from his embrace,
For without warning she had gone—
And to a better place.

One night he in his pantry sat
With no one *tête à tête*—
(To keep up plate he had, and that
You see kept him up late)—

When Betsy's ghost began to knock
Upon the pantry shelf,
Which gave, as you will guess, a shock
To him and to the delf.

"O John!" said she, "it's only me,
And this is why I come—
'Cos my last home from which I roam
Is Home the medium.

“ Around him countless spirits swarm
Like sparks in 'lectric cables—
'Tis set upon this ghostly form
To scrub them spirits' tables !

“ And since there's no such thing in all
The Spiritual Cosmog'ny—
Of Polish just one bottle small
I ask for the mahog'ny ! ”

Now he had spent his wages quite,
Had Thomas, luckless chap,
So neither he, nor Betsy's sprite,
Was worth a single rap !

Then from the household stock *quant. suff.*
He stole, 'twas wrong past doubt.
His master found him in the stuff—
And also found him out !

But Thomas did excuses plead,
When into court he came,
“ That since a spirit urged the deed
Nobody was to blame ! ”

The magistrate, with sternness due,
However, did opine,
“ Since Thomas fine distinctions drew,
His judgment should be fine ! ”

But Thomas, by his fate struck dumb,
To jail was borne away ;
As on his purse they could not come,
His person had to pay !



A CATCH.

BY A MIMIC OF MODERN MELODY.

IF you were queen of bloaters,
And I were king of soles,
The sea we'd wag our fins in
Nor heed the crooked pins in,
The water dropt by boaters,
To catch our heedless joles ;
If you were queen of bloaters
And I were king of soles.

If you were Lady Mile-End,
And I were Duke of Bow,
We'd marry and we'd quarrel,
And then, to point the moral,
Should Lord Penzance his file lend,
Our chains to overthrow ;
If you were Lady Mile-End,
And I were Duke of Bow.

If you were chill November,
And I were sunny June ;
I'd not with love pursue you ;
For I should be to woo you

(You're foggy, pray remember)
A most egregious spoon ;
If you were chill November,
And I were sunny June.

If you were cook to Venus,
And I were J. 19 ;
When missus was out dining,
Our suppertites combining,
We'd oft contrive between us
To keep the platter clean ;
If you were cook to Venus
And I were J. 19.

If you were but a jingle,
And I were but a rhyme ;
We'd keep this up for ever,
Nor think it very clever,
A grain of sense to mingle
At times with simple chime ;
If you were but a jingle,
And I were but a rhyme.





THE PROUD DAMOSEL.



MPHALE JUKES

Was courted by dukes, .
By marquises, viscounts, and earls ;
But she turned up her nose
At these and at those,
This most supercilious of girls.

Omphale Jukes,
With sneers and rebukes
She flouted the whole of the Peerage.
No lord, so she said,
Was she willing to wed,
Who lived in this terribly queer age.

Omphale Jukes,
Some chief of Mamelukes,
Or some hero of chivalry's days,
All beard, boots, and spurs,
She longed to make hers,
Like the damsels in tragedy-plays.

Omphale Jukes,
By a series of flukes,
By each one of her swains grew neglected ;
And losing her looks,
From her lovers' good books
Her image was quickly rejected !

Omphale Jukes
 Had to take to perukes,
 Having grown now as bald as a bandicoot,
 Or, if you prefer
 So to similise her,
 As bald as a rhyme that comes handy—coot !

So Omphale Jukes
 Attended St. Luke's,
 Took a seat at the usual pew-rate—
 Gave up Frank, Turk, and Vandal,
 For tracts, tea, and scandal,
 And finally married a curate.



ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF EATING.

What appetites ! three plates full of beef and potatoes we saw stowed
 away right and left. “Do you ever get an indigestion ?” I asked one
 of these splendid feeders. “What is that, Sir ?” he quietly replied.—
Report of Dinner at a Refuge.

WHO knows what wild ambitious dreams
 May fill that urchin's mind,
 What glory with prophetic gleams
 His visions have defined ?
 Perchance he thinks the years may bear
 Him onward to the civic chair,
 And mighty banquets at Guildhall ;
 Choice viands in a plenteous group,

With venison, real turtle soup,
And champagne bottles tall.

Alas, he little knows the aches
A Corporation feels ;
How indigestion often makes
Mere miseries of meals ;
How livers suffer from remorse ;
How ruthless gout chalks out its course,
And won't allow its prey leg-bail ;
How real grief champagne can bring,
How ailments bitterly can spring—
Ay, e'en from bitter ale !

What numbers envying his plight,
Would forfeit many a pound
For such an honest appetite,
And such digestion sound ;
To them by turtle is expressed,
Not gentle peace, but want of rest,
And many twinges, throbs and pangs.
The coats their stomachs wear have seen
Far better days ; like that I ween,
Which on this urchin hangs.

To each their sufferings ! Aldermen
At feasts for hunger groan ;
While he has appetite, but then
Lacks even crust or bone.
Yet, ah, why should he change his state
And swap for Indigestion's weight
Light meals and short and scant supplies
To mar his comfort were amiss.
No !—while such ignorance is bliss,
'Twere folly to be wise.



TWENTY-TWO AND THIRTY-FIVE.

IS a dozen of years—or but little more—
That Tempus has drawn and cracked,
Since my birthdays counted two and a score,
Though I scarcely can think it fact !
Sure years must have flown as they seldom do
So early at age to arrive,
For I—but a youngster at twenty-two,
Feel an oldster at thirty-five !

I gathered honey from ev'ry flower
That tempted my roving lip :
Nor cared to store it, for bloom and bower
Seemed ever with sweets a-drip.
Alas, what a change I have to rue,
When I come to examine the hive.
For the combs, that were laden at twenty-two,
Seem empty at thirty-five !

A ball was at that time my greatest bliss
(A dinner I now like best) ;
Quadrille—waltz—polka—nought came amiss,
As a partner's slim waist I pressed.
My form was slim, when I gaily flew
Through the mazy waltz to dive :
I danced all the evening at twenty-two,
I'm a wall-flower at thirty-five.

I loved ! How often in love I fell
With blonde or with sweet brunette
'Twould occupy far too long to tell,—
(Supposing I don't forget).
But all of them jilted the lover true,
Who has managed howe'er to survive.
Oh, would I'd the chances of twenty-two
With the wisdom of thirty-five.

Well, five-and-thirty is no great age—
As I see you're about to urge.
But I'm growing bald-headed and staid and sage,
And seem on the senile verge ;
Yet though to my youth I bid adieu,
I will keep my heart alive,
Nor lose for the shadows of twenty-two
The substance of thirty-five.

U AND I.

O his beloved said a bard,
" If *I* by you should be rejected,
Your future will be thus affected—
You will not married be but marred ! "

Replied the maid, " Suppose I do
Prefer the willow, sir, to you,
Why, marry !—many swains there be
Who'll gladly give an eye to me.



THE VAGABOND TO HIS DOG.

A PATHETIC DITTY.

KICKS, not halfpence, have been our lot
Since we set out in the world together ;
But on, as friends, we have somehow got,
In stormy as well as in sunny weather.

For we don't care much for the showers we get—
A drenching can cause us but little pain ;
Your collar's not likely to rust with the wet,
And I have no clothes to be spoilt by the rain.


Our wants, like our comforts, are very few,
A doorway will shelter us both from the storm ;
Our companionship's disinterested too,
For neither's fat keeps the other warm.

You ought to cost me twelve shillings a year ;
But the tax-collector, although he's a scraper,
Can't get any money from *me*, that's clear—
I've no house where the beggar can leave the paper !

We live as we can, like honest chaps—
A mouldy crust we consider a feast ;
Though cook sometimes throws us a plate of scraps,
With,—glancing at you,—“ Poor, faithful beast ! ”

But pshaw! your fidelity doesn't deceive me—
And why I'll ne'er part with you briefly I'll tell you :—
There's nobody'd take you, if you were to leave me,
And nobody'd buy you, if I were to sell you !

*DO YOU ?*

OME people have only to lie on their backs
And open their mouths as wide as they may,
And apricots, nectarines, peaches by sacks,
Fall into them quite in the regular way.
For peaches, and apricots—plums, perhaps :—
It may be the usual thing to do :
But why should they fall into lazy folks' laps?
I don't see why ! Do you ?

Yet men may have laboured the whole of their lives
(Alas, 'tis certain too many must !)
To earn for their starving children and wives
A daily meal : though it be but a crust !
And that crust is almost as rare as a peach
To some poor strugglers—and not a few !
Why shouldn't there be a share for each ?
I don't see why ! Do you ?

There are men who are rich, or are nobly born,
And they do strange things. But the world won't see.
To steal were an action mayhap they'd scorn—
Yet worse things than theft among crimes there be.
But in *this* world somehow they roam at large
(Though some one hereafter may get his due),
And Society closes its eyes to the charge.
I don't see why. Do you?

For, kennel'd in gutters, and reared in jail,
And left by us all in the slime,
With hunger's promptings—if others fail—
To drive them to sin and crime :
If the children of ignorance, poverty, vice,
The *one* course we leave them pursue,
They're punished by pitiless statutes precise :
I don't see why. Do you?

'Tis a very mad world, you must understand !
Where the lucky have all of the luck ;
Those who don't want aid get a helping hand,
And those who are down are struck ;
Where to toothless gums we give nuts galore,
To good grinders no nuts accrue ;
Folks with nought get nothing—with plenty get more.
I don't see why ! Do you?





A DREAM.

THE other night, my dinner done,
I sat and sipped my wine ;
The *Athenæum* I'd begun—
So drear a lot was mine !
But soon its dulness o'er my brain
I felt insidious creep,
I struggled with my fate in vain !
It sent me off to sleep.

I dreamt the most insane of dreams
That fancy could rehearse,—
For all things, rushing to extremes,
Of truth were the reverse.
I saw the very strangest sights,
I heard the wildest news,
I viewed things in the oddest lights
And in the queerest hues.

I visited the Commons' House—
Oh, what a change I saw !
The country squires were full of *nous*,
The Rads were full of awe ;
Disraeli neither snarled nor bit,
Gladstone lacked eloquence ;
And Osborne was devoid of wit—
And Newdegate talked sense !

I saw the Stage. No manager
Would risk a play's success,
Because he'd leading parts prefer,
And would have nothing less.
No companies of "sticks" were these,
With one sole "star," that shone.
And nobody demanded "fees,"
And "paper" was unknown.

The Peace Society complained
Our army was too small !
Teetotallers from bosh abstained ;
And Spurgeon gave a ball ;
The rich folks with the poor folks shared
(All coin in bankers' hands ;
And acred squires 'twas time declared
To re-distribute lands.


In literature all the fame
Was given to desert :
And if a youngster made a name,
No older hand felt hurt.
The *Saturday* to drive its team
Had Tupper just bespoke,
When feeling that *must* be a dream
I suddenly awoke.





THE COOK'S VOYAGE.

A CANNIBALISTIC CHRONICLE.*

HE British Minister at the Caraccas
Was terribly in want of a good cook :
The servants that he had were quite as black as
The Sender of all cooks, but then they took
No pride in culinary art. No jackass
Of all the lot could roast, by hook or crook,
Or boil, or bake, or broil, or barbecue—
They were, in short, too stupid e'en to stew.

It chanced the Minister was one of those
Who think "good breeding" only means "good feeding,"
He wished to his wild neighbours to disclose
Old England's might and majesty exceeding,
And thought no better course he could propose
Than banquets—to the savage stomach pleading :
As, in the capital of his own nation,
Its head he'd look for in its Corporation.

And so he wrote to a good-natured friend—
Told him the dismal nature of his look-out,
And begged of him without delay to send—
By the next mail, in short—a clever cook out,

* Founded on an anecdote in a recently published novel.

And, further still the favour to extend,
To see that all the requisites he took out,
But, chief of all, to choose a cook superior
To be the Minister for his Interior.

And soon the cook was found and sent on board,
With pans and pannakins and pots and platters ;
In fact the vessel's hold was but a hoard
Of twenty thousand culinary matters,
By whose aid hunger's routed—or restored.
Now, Cookery's great masterpiece the latter's ;
For relishes must alternate with banquets,
As felons' appetite hard work at crank whets.

A *Cordon Bleu* our cook was, and a Frenchman,
Who never deemed it merely was his part
To stuff with solids, or with slops to drench man,
But to make eating truly a "fine art."
He had approved himself a faithful henchman,
As *Chef* to some one after his own heart—
The city's "ancientest" and greediest alderman—
You never saw a fatter or a balder man.

Well ! the ship sailed. Her course, by chart or map ta'en
Was sou'-sou'-west, wind chopping, weather bad,
Our friend the *Chef* made kickshaws for the captain,
Who was delighted that our hero had
On board his ship a passage by good hap ta'en :
And he had reason sound for being glad,
Regaled upon such sauce and soup and jelly !
You'd Ude p'rhaps find them in—or Francatelli.

The Captain was a very jovial dog,
And gave himself entirely up to feeding ;

Whereby he did not rightly keep his log,
And of his reckoning was all unheeding ;
So when at last there came on a thick fog
He did not know which way the ship was speeding, •
And when he thought himself long leagues from dry land,
The vessel drove upon a desert island.

A desert island truly ! When in boats
The sailors landed, they found no live things there !
No rats, no mice, no rabbits, and no goats ;
There were no boobies (birds with thumbs' for wings)
there.
No creatures wild—and therefore no wild oats—
There were no tittlebats e'en in the springs there :
An island so deserted 'twould exert
One's utmost skill to find e'en a desert !

What made the matter worse was that the wreck
Sank with her cargo in the quicksands shifting :
One case alone, which stood upon her deck,
Shoreward upon the flowing tide came drifting ;
They broke it open gladly—what a check
Their joy received, when, on the lid uplifting
They saw 'twas full of saucepans, stewpans, colanders,—
Useless to them, as Norton's Pumps to Hollanders.*

“ How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds
Makes ill deeds done ”—so says King John (see Shake-
speare).
Hence most of those—as logic e'en concedes—
Who drown themselves, must in streams, pools, or lakes
peer.

* The *Chef* would here observe “ der is a mull in der ! ”
Well, I'm aware some cooks pronounce it “ cullinder.”

Hence also are their minds inclined to feeds,
Who into books on roasts, and boils, and bakes, peer.
To which last case was that of every man akin
Who gazed on empty stewpan, pot, and pannakin.

With hunger p'inted by the sight of pots,
Each began crying out for food, poor sinner !
And somebody proposed their drawing lots
To find out which should stand the others' dinner :
Not thereby meaning "who should pay their shots,"
But who should prove the "man" described as "inner,"
Whose line it must be, by supplying lining,
To dress—the dinner? No ! the party dining !

The lots were cast—the lottery not long was,
The tickets and the drawers being few.
The *Chef* was fated, since his chance the wrong was,
To form—not cook—the dinner for the crew.
He knelt and sued—his pleading very strong was
But what it meant not one among them knew,
And all believed 'twas terror animated him,
Until the Captain, knowing French, translated him.

And then his fancy proved to be a strange one !
He not the very least objection saw
To being cooked—not cooking, for a change. One
Sole wish he had—that they'd not eat him raw,—
'Twould be to waste a dinner ! He'd arrange one—
If they would but allow him so much law—
With lots of courses and the rarest dishes.
He prayed they'd grant this last of all his wishes !

They acquiesced, and gave him, till next day
To get his garnishing, and sauce, and gravy.

They knew he had no chance to run away
 Because his bounds were very strait, though wave-y.
 And he set forth the banquet to purvey,
 As though he were Purveyor to the Navy,
 And a collection of weed, moss, and lichen, made,
 Assisted by the cabin-boy, as kitchen maid.

Next he drew up the following

MENU.

*Purée de Chef. Cooktek au naturel,
 Tête de Français enhoué en tortue.
 Filet de l'homme à la maître d'hôtel.
 Moi-même aux truffes. Croquettes de Cordon Bleu
 Oreilles de rôtisseur au Béchamel,
 Côtelettes de Cuisinier à l'Hollandaise.*

Serving himself out thus in various ways.

And last he taught the ship's cook how to dress
 The several dishes that you read the names of;
 With full directions for each savoury mess,
 Each seasoning with allowance for the claims of:
 And all so clear there was no need to guess
 Even the least ingredients the aims of.
 Then, showing him the garnish to embellish him,
 He thanked his stars such appetites would relish him!

Now going back he fell upon his knees, and
 Declared himself prepared. He did not quail;
 But—as the knife was ready at his weasand—
 A cry arrested it. It was a hail
 From somebody who roaming on the sea-sand
 Had seen—and signalled to—a distant sail,

Which proved to be the "Seahorse" from St. Mary's,
Laden with hemp-seed, bound for the Canaries.

As captives, long shut out from air and sun,
Welcome their unexpected freedom madly,
So with a shout the shipwrecked sailors run
To meet their rescuers—all hail them gladly—
"All" did I say? I was in error! One
Appeared to look upon the matter sadly,
And loitered by the implements of cookery,
Like mother-rook with marksmen in the rookery.

It was the *Chef*! His eyes, with tears o'erbrimming,
Dropt needless salt into the bubbling pot,
Which, in a fit of absence, he kept skimming,
Although the broth such tending wanted not.
And then he saw how some of them were swimming—
And some already to the boats had got,
And sighed—"Ze fool! to mees so rare a treat!
Zey does not know so good I am to eat!"

Then down he wandered slowly to the shore,
And waded out knee-deep into the brine,
Wishing—yet scarcely daring—to implore
The rescued seamen to come back and dine.
Yet long hours after, while the vessel bore
Them far away, he could not but repine,
And sighed, while pointing to the island small,
"You should moch best have eat me after all!"

APPLICATION.

In human nature there's strange contrariety,
Some minds are very oddly warped and crook'd,

And there are people who would by society
Far rather be looked-down-on than o'erlook'd !
Indeed one has known persons, whose anxiety
Was—when debarred from cooking—to be cook'd.
How many are there who would fain be glorious,
But, failing that, are glad to be notorious?

POST-SCRIPTUM.

Though I have said farewell, I must come back, as
I had forgotten utterly to mention
The British Minister at the Caraccas,
And how he suffered from his cook's detention.
Well, of the *Chef* he did not feel the lack, as
His native neighbours voted in convention,
Not asking them to dinner was his whim—
So asked themselves to dinner, and ate—*him* !





SANTA KLAUS.

LISIE is fast asleep in bed,
And see, her stocking is hung at its head.
“Why?”
Fie,

For shame! I must cry,
If you are not aware of this festival high,
The object of numberless hopes and vows—
The Feast of the Child's Friend, Santa Klaus.
The night of all nights, whereon, 'tis said,
No murmurs at all
From the little folks fall
When they're told it is time to go to bed.

O Santa Klaus, dear Santa Klaus!
Ere time and care had furrow'd my brows,
How well I remember
The glee and delight
With which we watch'd for your festal night,
And counted the hours till the sixth of December!
And then how vainly we strove to keep
From falling asleep
Ere midnight deep,
In the fearful hope of getting a peep
Through our eyelid (closed
As though we dozed)

At you and your burden of trinkets and toys,
Intended for good little girls and boys.
 But somehow sleep
 Would always creep
To our lids, and our senses in slumber steep,
When—like little Elsie, the picture shows—
 We saw in a dream,
 By the moon's pale beam,
Your gracious figure glide over the snows,
And enter our room,
 Where, despite the gloom,
We spied all the wonderful treasures you brought,
With a great many toys, by our fancy wrought,
Of which no toymaker ever has thought.

O Santa Klaus, O Santa Klaus !
 When Thought o'er the past days wanders back,
 What memories spring along the track,
Like buried treasures turned-up by ploughs !
 For I can clearly recall as well—
 If ever by chance it so befell
That I had not been—and what urchin could ?—
For a week or so unswervingly good—
 With what inward dread
 I crept into bed,
And hung my stocking with awe at the head,
 Lest awaking at morn
 I should find it forlorn
Of toys, but containing a rod instead ;
Though (and here a tear will arise unbid),
Thanks to your kindness I never did ;
 Or the tender love of those dear ones, who
 Are always allowed to impersonate you—
A fact from the children as yet to be hid.

O Santa Klaus, good Santa Klaus!
How very early we used to arouse!—
 Ere the very first ray
 Of coming day
Had kiss'd the snow on the topmost boughs.
Yet small was the sleep the house got after
 For shouts, and cries
 Of joy and surprise,
And snatches of song, and bursts of laughter.
As each new treasure came out of the stocking
The noise we made was undoubtedly shocking.
 There were squeaking dogs,
 And leaping frogs,
And jerky sawyers at work upon logs,
 And dolls great and small,
 And a cup-and-ball—
But if I attempt to enumerate all,
I think I shall probably find Miss Braddon
Forbid me the rest of my verses to add on.
 Yet I would I could paint
 What we thought of the saint
For remembering each of our wants and wishes;
 For the other day
 I had happen'd to say
I should like a box of magnetic fishes,
While my sister longed for some plates and dishes;
 And lo and behold
 What the stockings unfold:
A dinner-service of white and gold,
And a brace of such magnetised silvery salmon
As never the tide of the Severn swam on!

O Santa Klaus, dear Santa Klaus,
 Youth glides away,

And our hair turns grey !
Yet, though Time our phantasy disendows,
Long may the little ones love you, believe you,
Long in dreams as a guest receive you ;
For when once they have lost you, they may not
retrieve you.

Then sleep, little Elsie, and see in a dream
The good saint's form in the moonlight's gleam,
And toys in profusion—
They are but delusion ;
But then the toys of us older folk
Are things too often of vapour and smoke.
Sleep, little Elsie, and, dreaming, smile ;
Childhood's pleasures are but for a while.
So dream when you may,
And wake with the day
To set your full stocking's contents in array,
And thank Santa Klaus without delay.

But, little one, first you must give me a kiss,
And promise that you will remember this :
When you are older, by and by,
And see the world with a clearer eye,
And many beliefs of childhood die—
If then you are told Santa Klaus is a fiction,
Answer at once in contradiction :
" No fiction is he, but a spirit rather,
That embodies the love of mother and father."
For thus much, I hope, the whole world allows,
Is true of the bountiful Santa Klaus.



THE BELLE OF A GARRISON TOWN.

WHEN I lived with my uncle at Plymouth—
 'Tis now twenty summers ago—
 I was wont to pay court to a damsel,
 Where waves whisper under the Hoe.
Her sweet Christian name was Amelia ;
 Her loved patronymic was Brown ;
Oh, why did I fix my affections
 On the Belle of a Garrison Town ?

The first floor of her heart (like the lodgings
 Where Brown, *mère*, a living did earn)
Was by officers occupied always
 Of the regiments there quartered in turn :
While I (like the man in the attic,
 Whose rent every week was paid down)
Was retain'd, 'mid all flirtings erratic,
 By the Belle of the Garrison Town.

Yet if e'er of her wandering fancy
 I ventured aloud to complain—
“ There's no harm,” she replied, “ that I *can* see,
 If I *do* waltz with Captain Maclean ! ”
But then, when the Highlanders quitted,
 Came the Fiftieth, of fighting renown ;
And she found a new flame, as befitted
 The Belle of a Garrison town.

Her figure was natty and dainty,
And white were her neck and her brow,
And her cheek was red—rosy, not painty—
I can't say the same for it now!
For last summer at Plymouth I met her
(Her hotel is the best there—The Crown),
And she's altered—but not for the better—
The Belle of the Garrison Town.

Her cheek bears the Bloom Oriental
A neighbouring hairdresser vends ;
And her smile displays miracles dental,
Where metal with ivory blends ;
While her curls, so short, frequent, and frizzy,
Are a cocoanut-fibre-like brown.
Yes, the hand of Old Time has been busy
With the Belle of the Garrison Town !

Ah, well ! We're both older and staidier,
And her late licensed-victualling spouse,
Who a rich buxom widow has made her,
Has left her an excellent house ;
Where ('mid other things worthy of comment)
Some excellent wine is laid down ;—
'Tis in that I am pledging this moment
The Belle of the Garrison Town !

Ah, once every word she would utter,
My innermost breast could control—
Now I'm stirred when she says "melted butter
Is the very best thing for my sole"—
For the stomach and heart are connected,
Both feel, when on one the fates frown—
And my heart through my stomach's affected
By the Belle of the Garrison Town !

Why, I own that I love a good dinner,
Washed down with a good glass of wine—
She gives both good, as I am a sinner,
And her Hollands are almost divine !
Well, any poor fellow she *did* owe
Amends for an early cast down,
Might do worse than to marry the widow—
Ex-Belle of the Garrison Town !

WALTER WENN.

A CLEARANCE CLERK'S CAROL.

YOUNG WALTER WENN he drove a pen
And sat upon a stool,
Mildest of men was Walter Wenn,
Yet by no means a fool.

At Clearing-House, mute as a mouse,
Six hours a day or more
My hero worked, his toil ne'er shirked
(His time was ten till four).

His truthful way went Walter, gay,
He never told a lie,
Until one day he answered "Nay"—
He should have answered "Ay."

By conscience blame he felt the shame
Of the evil deed he'd done ;
He said, " My name will lose its fame,"
Just then the clock struck one.

This is the time (it suits my rhyme)
At which our lunch is done.
Quick to the chime came viands prime—
Wenn merely had a bun.

But lined with fruit, the bun would suit
The tenor of his thought ;
For, being cute, he could compute
And not be much distraught ;

And well he knew the bun's just due
For clearing up the mind.
Pleasant to view when nice and new,
And free from bile unkind.

These little cakes oft heal mistakes
Arising through such ills
As stomach-aches from heavy steaks—
They're better far than pills.

Wenn sat and chewed his modest food,
The while his spirits rose,
He ceased to brood,—in pleasant mood
He said, " Why should I prose ? "

And from that day, whenever " Nay "
Won't with his prospects run,
He'll calmly say, ay, yes, or yea,
Through the lesson from the bun.



HARDICANUTE.

HARDICANUTE is the name of my hero,
Naughty young man is this Hardicanute,
Never his passion is tamed unto zero.
No one his tongue can persuade to be mute.
All his spare money is spent in defending,
Actions which maidens unfortunate bring,
Hearts are too easily broken—the mending
Is, as we know, quite a different thing.

Oh ! such a delicate fancy has Hardy—
This is the playful for Hardicanute—
Never was known such an amorous card, he
Plays his cards better than playing the flute.
Just as the fishes jumped up at Arion,
When he played tunes on the back of a fish,
Maidens our Hardicanute have their eye on ;—
Hardicanute answers playfully, “ Pish ! ”

Strangest of whims in this world, I assure you,
Runs in the noddle of Hardicanute,
“ Virtuous maidens I cannot endure you,”
Frequently boasts this unmannerly brute.
“ If you are famous, oh, woo you I’m game too
Newspaper fame is the thing that’ll suit,
Pilferous, poisonous pests, are the same to
Yours very faithfully, Hardicanute.”

When Mrs. Manning was at the Old Bailey,
Hardy was instantly struck with her charms,
"Black satin lady," he wrote to her daily,
"Hardy is longing to rush to your arms!"
Wicked old Winsor he thought was ill-treated,
Talked of her quite in a chivalric way.
Longed near to Madeline Smith to be seated,
Asked Mrs. Borrodaile out to the play.

Rachel he spoke of in language ecstatic,
Threatened to tweak the Commissioner's nose,
Placed himself daily in posture dramatic,
Close to his darling at Madame Tussaud's.
Basest of men and of lovers unfeeling,
Hardicanute you are at it again,
See him in lover-like attitude kneeling,
Lowly to Queen Isabella of Spain!





PONS ASINORUM.

XH, what an age ago it seems
Since deep in mathematic themes
I sat, a boy, at school !
Alas, alas ! the ways of men !
I was but a young donkey then—
Now I am an old fool.

How hard I strove to top the ridge—
The middle arca of Asses' Bridge—
And sighed to get away.
How much less bitter were my cup,
If, with my Euclid not shut up,
I were a boy to day.

" A line has only length." How true !
Some lines with which I've had to do
To too great lengths have gone.
Alas, how many pounds of mine
" Produced " the Diddlehampton Line—
A line that's overdrawn.

" A point has got no magnitude "—
One should not point because it's rude—
Or I could indicate
How certain points of law—some nine—
Have quite made o'er that cash of mine
To the Directorate.

Oh, woe is me ! and well-a-day !
If only I could have my say,
 My school-days I'd redeem.
On that old bridge I would recline—
I'd choose my point, and drop my line
 And angle in the stream !

APRIL SHOWERS.

H, April showers
 Are good for flowers,
 And fill the bowers
 With perfumes rare,
But twinge erratic,
And pang rheumatic,
And not ecstatic,
 Do they prepare !

And though the leanness
And arid meanness
Of lawns with greenness
 They hide and clothe ;
They, past disputing,
Set corns a-shooting,
Which makes your booting
 A thing to loathe !

And of the Future
 Although they suit your
 Bright dreams, compute you're
 The Past's sad prey,
 The while you yell a
 Vain ritornella
 For that umbrella,
 That's stolen away !



HOW SINGULAR.

THOUGH pleasures still can touch my soul,
 Though sorrow's fountain still is open—
 Yet smile I not as erst I smole,
 Nor weep I as I erst have wopen.

Some years ago, in my belief,
 Life was a pudding, earth its platter ;
 I've pluck'd my plums of joy and grief—
 And all the rest is only batter.





PEACE AT ANY PRICE.

MY tables, pr'ythee ; lest I lose
The hint—to set it down were meet—
That “if you can't eat what you choose,
’Twere best you chews whate’er you eat.”

I rob not Tupper of his due
When this portentous saw I utter—
“Although it disagrees with you,
Don't quarrel with your bread-and-butter !”

Thames mud of the constituent parts
Of butter may be reckoned head :
And e'en the relish that imparts
May be extremely thinly-spread :
Still be all discontent repressed—
Indulge no mumbling mutinous mutter !
And (I advise you for the best)
“Don't quarrel with your bread-and-butter.”

Your bread may scarce be fit for beast—
May be too foul for fowl ; and, ah,
Its sole connection with the (y)east
The thought suggestive—“Alum, bah !”
Yet do not murmur—seize the knife,
And of the loaf become a cutter.
This maxim is with wisdom rife,
“Don't quarrel with your bread-and-butter !”

If than no bread, you silly oaf,
You find—as surely find you will—
Better by far is half a loaf,
The smallest pat is butter still !
So ope your mouth and shut your eyes,
Munch quietly—don't choke and splutter.
And—if you'd be accounted wise,
“ Don't quarrel with your bread-and-butter.”

Butter—though “its offence be rank”—
Will make your bread than dry bread fitter :
E'en for dry bread your fortunes thank—
It may be dry—but *no* bread's bitter !
Although your case as hard you view,
It lacks still desperation utter
While it is possible that you
Can quarrel with your bread-and-butter.





THE SEASONS.

BY AN INVALID.

I LOVE the Spring,
It seems to bring
Fresh breezes from the Adriatic :—
 (The wind, at least,
 Is from the East,
And gives me agonies rheumatic !)

 When Summer's here,
 I hold it dear,—
Of flowery wealth a gracious giver :—
 (Although I've got,
 Whene'er it's hot,
Some touches of a sluggish liver).

 When Autumn hints
 With beauteous tints
That Summer's song has its cadenza,
 I love it well :—
 (Though truth to tell,
I know it brings me influenza !)

 And Winter's snow
 I love also—
For snow a seasonable sight is :—
 (Although there are,
 Cough, cold, catarrh,
Diphtheria, phthisis, and bronchitis !)



COPY.

A JESTER'S "IN MEMORIAM."

HERE'S half a column yet to fill
Ere morn, come foul or fine.
My poor Pierian pump must spill
Its quantum—wash or wine.
It ought to be a brisk Champagne—
At least a Bitter—hoppy ;
For let it shine, or let it rain,
A man must write his "copy."

And yet the task at times is hard :
I turn my papers o'er—
To come upon a black-edged card.
Poor Tom ! my heart is sore
To think upon that vacant chair.
My handkerchief is soppy—
Jest, Fool !—what right have you to care ?
Sit down to comic "copy."

What ! not a jest or pun at call ?
Nay, read the journals through :
My eyes upon a *Journal* fall
That tells, dear Jack, of you !

Again I check the rising sob,
And wipe the eyelids droppy—
Kind Heaven ! my rhymes, oh hateful job,
Are redolent of “copy.”

Yon picture, Paul, your pencil drew ;—
That poem—Jeff, you penned it.
Is there much “copy” more to do?—
A man so longs to end it !
Is there a world beyond the—pun,
And free from verses sloppy?
Because, if so, I own for one
I’m growing tired of “copy.”

Fool !—Set the tables on a roar !
Shake cap and bells, and crow !
What, though beyond the folding-door
Dear life-tides ebb and flow?
Your crown must be of weeds and straws !
No bays—not even poppy,
Folly, not feeling, ’tis that draws,
Come ! where’s that comic “copy?”





SUCCESS.

I HAVE dwelt for some years
In this valley of tears,
And I thus my experience confess—
If a man would succeed,
But one thing will he need—
There's nothing succeeds like success !

There's famed Dr. A,
Who lives over the way,—
To consult him what hundreds will press :
While poor B, who's next door,
Twice his skill has—and more—
But there's nothing succeeds like success.

There's that clever chap C,
Whose pictures will be
By the hangers rejected, I guess.
While dull D, the R.A.,
Gathers money all day—
For there's nothing succeeds like success.

His smart comedy E,
Is still fated to see
By the managers scorned, *sans* redress.
While there's F's latest twaddle
Held up as a model.
There is nothing succeeds like success,

Then the public still shirk
G's last-published work,
Full of genius and power, ne'ertheless.
While H, for his trash,
Appears coining the cash.
Oh, there's nothing succeeds like success.

The whole alphabet through
I this text might pursue,
But, oh, why need I further digress !
For 'tis clear on this head
That from A down to Z
There is nothing succeeds like success.





MY SOLE PROPRIETOR.

WHAT *can* she do but love me,
That little wife of mine ?
Her brains are far above me,
For brains are in her line.

I lack the airs of fashion,
The lordling's lofty tone ;
But she returns my passion
Because I'm all her own.

I spell and cipher badly,
My aspirates I drop :
My talk—I feel it sadly—
Is not at all tip-top.
I fear my faults distress her,
But she has never shown
The least annoyance, bless her !
Because I'm all her own.

My face is not Apollo's,
My nose is hardly straight.
My right eye rarely follows
The movements of its mate.
My form presents unduly
A prominence of bone ;
And yet she loves me truly
Because I'm all her own.

The marks of youth diminish,
 And on my bullet head
 The curls get grey and thinnish
 That once grew thick and red.
 But why at age be snarling
 When youth's for ever flown :
 She loves me still, the darling,
 Because I'm all her own.



A HERO!

HE stood with a perturbèd air,
 And gazed with pallid face
 On something that he held,—his hair
 Hung down in woful case.
 The winter wind to howl began,
 He heeded not its din ;
 Oh, say, what does that stern-faced man,
 That lonely room within ?
 Conflicting passions o'er his brow
 Are sweeping to and fro ;
 He seems about to dare—but now
 He vaguely mutters “No.”
 Say does he seek the curse of Cain,
 Oh ! does he mean to kill ?
 He turns, and gasping once again
 He calmly—*takes a pill !*



MY GRANDSIRE'S ADVICE.

MY Grandsire was a hale old man
Of fourscore years and ten :
And me he sometimes used to tan—
But petted now and then.
And good advice he gave me, too,
His wisdom to evince :—
Of things he taught me then, a few
I've stuck to ever since.
He'd call me to him " Here, my lad ! "
And then my head he'd stroke,
" Remember, boy, cigars are bad—
A pipe's a thing to smoke ! "

He'd smoked a fair amount of weed,
And some experience had !
'Twas very kind of him indeed,
To teach so young a lad.
The wisdom of his silver hairs,
He kindly would employ
In speaking of the world's affairs,
To me—a little boy !
" Be sure in after-life, you dog,"
He said and shook his head,
" To take, last thing, a glass of grog
Before you go to bed ! "

He'd drunk some grog, too, in his time,
And I was not a fool,
So I observed his precepts :—I'm
A credit to the school !
But we're not like the men of yore—
What they did, we can't do :
For he was hearty at fourscore—
I'm done at forty-two !
My Grandsire was a hale old man
Of fourscore years and ten :
But then, you see, the good old plan
Won't suit us modern men.





THE REASON OF IT.


DO you ask me the cause of my firmly declining
To join in the revel, the dance, or the song?
Do you ask why I'm seldom or never seen dining
At boards where the world's giddy votaries throng?
Would you learn how the garment I formerly cherished—
Which takes from the swallow the form of its tail—
Hath survived while its bloom and its brightness have
perished
From hanging so painfully long on a nail?
I will tell you the reason; it forcibly strikes me
That nobody loves me, if any one likes me.

There are times in our life when this earthly Sahara
Receives the salute of the deadly Simoom :
When the harp that was long ago tuneful in Tara
Reverberates only in echoes of gloom.
I have known such a time—when my idols were shattered,
When Friendship and Love spread their wings to depart ;
When Despair (arm-in-arm with Misanthropy) battered
Remarkably hard at the door of my heart.
I will tell you the reason ; it forcibly strikes me
That nobody loves me, if any one likes me.

Woe is me that I opened this heart at their summons,
Instead of remorselessly barring its door ;



A HISTORY.

 HERE was a man, so legends say,
And he—how strange to tell!—
Was born upon the very day,
Whereon his birthday fell.

He was a baby first. And then
He was his parents' joy ;
But was a man soon after, when
He ceased to be a boy.

And when he'd got to middle life,
To marry was his whim :
The selfsame day he took a wife,
Some woman wedded him.

None saw him to the other side
Of Styx by Charon ferried :
But 'tis conjectured that he died
Because he has been buried.



Many lodgers I've had, but a pair of such rum'uns
I never—no, never—encountered before.
When the worm shall abscond from the depths of his apple,
The earwig abandon the folds of his rose,
Shall my destiny grant me the courage to grapple
For life or for death with my tenants and foes.
I will tell you the reason ; it forcibly strikes me
That nobody loves me, if any one likes me.

'Twas my hope to have died with my secret unwritten—
This badge of my sorrow, this mark of my shame :
But it gnaws like the fox which appears to have bitten
That gallant young Spartan (I don't know his name).
Let the frivolous jeer at my bitter confession ;
A nature like mine how can *they* understand ?
I will put the whole world, if I can, in possession
Of all that I know on the question in hand. ;
So I tell you the reason ; it forcibly strikes me
That nobody loves me, if any one likes me.





AFTER THE DANCE.


XLAS ! I cannot sleep a wink,
But toss till I am nearly raving,
I cannot dream, and dare not think
What I shall look like when I'm shaving.
Upon the wall fair forms I trace,
My ears ring with a merry Babel ;
Again that voice ! that haunting face !
Again those maddening notes of " Mabel ! "

Two hours ago I sought my bed,
'Twas light when I blew out the candle ;
My pillow's gone, my fever'd head
Reposes on—what's this ? The handle
Of darling Amy's sandal fan,
Which clumsily last night was broken,
She smiled, and called me " naughty man,"
But broke my heart, and here's the token.

A sweet mirage of loveliness
Intoxicates me as I'm lying ;
I'm tangled now in Maggie's dress,
And now with Isabel I'm flying.
But, hark ! a German valse ! Around
I float with pretty Mildred Airey ;
How light she is, and o'er the ground
Skims like a gossamer-wing'd fairy.

My arms are twin'd—was that a knock?
Alas! what dismal sounds to wake on.
“Please, sir, its nearly ten o'clock,
And getting very cold your bacon.”
How changed the scene! They say aright,
Life is a ceaseless round of sorrow;
I often wish to-day last night,
Instead of being but to-morrow!

SURGIT AMARI ALIQUID.

 HERE is a charm, divine no doubt,
In contemplating ruins hoary,
When high aloft the moon shines out,
Involving all in silver glory;
But still intrudes an afterthought,
A kind of stern prosaic warning,
That dearly we shall have to pay
By pains rheumatic in the morning.

'Tis true there is a deep delight,
When friend to friend gives merry greeting,
In quaffing goblets rosy bright,
And drinking to the next glad meeting;

But still, drink gaily as they may,
Weak mortals feel a twinge of sorrow,
If once they think that they must pay
By racking headaches on the morrow !

It seems the curse of this poor state
That every draught and sip of pleasure
Is tempered by the hand of fate
With drops from Pain's malignant measure.
Though merrily we drink and laugh,
However high our exultation,
However sweet the cup we quaff,
Still *latet*, under all, vexation.

Affliction's draught, though sages say
'Tis wholesome, is by no means pleasant
It may prove sweet some future day,
'Tis gall and vinegar at present !
But let us drink of ALLSOPP'S ale,—
For thirsty souls few drinks are fitter,
At fate's decree howe'er we quail,
We then shall find a sweet in *Bitter* !





WHAT YOUR ROVING CONTRIBUTOR
SENDS.

“Glad to hear you are going for a holiday, but shall expect copy as usual.”—*Extract from Editor's letter,*

MORN will arise
Like orient flies,
That moonlight emeralds meet ;
The nightingale's twitter
Shall quiver and fitter,
And percolate through the street.

Stars shall burn blue,
And transmeate through
The purple being of bards ;
And beetles shall wake
In the nascent lake,
And rattle their jubilant shards.

Thunders shall gleam,
And the night-winds dream,
And comets shall carol like snails ;
And the wild cascades,
And their plantigrades,
Shall waltz with the morning mails.

But never a sound,
Well-tempered and ground,
Shall slip through our finger tips ;
But To-morrow shall lay
Its hands on To-day,
Discounting a fierce eclipse !

With a whoop halloo,
Shall the raucous dew
Go hunting the lark from the fallow,
And the simpering owl,
Like a sensible fowl,
Shall batten on wild marsh-mallow.

“ What does this mean ? ”
Why, you ought to have been
Better instructed, you see,
Than to ask for rhymes
In these holiday times
From an overworked ass like me !





THE ROBIN.

A THOROUGHLY ORIGINAL POEM BY AN ADMIRER OF
E. A. POE.

MY brain feeling muddy,
I sat in my study,
Reflecting on minds and on matters ;
But the more that I thought,
The more was I brought
To the verge of the madness of hatters.

But to me, scarcely recking,
The sound as of pecking
Was borne—like a tap at a wicket ;
And I said, “ There’s a mouse
Or a rat in the house,
Or a cock-roach, or—possibly—cricket ! ”

When, lo ! on the valance,
Attempting to balance
Himself, was a red-breasted robin !
And I cried, in confusion,
“ Confound your intrusion !
A mess you have thrust your small nob in ! ”

“ Do you happen to know,
Where corn-plasters grow ? ”

I shrieked, with a haughtiness bitter,
 "Or why my wife's stopping
 So long at her shopping?"
Quoth the robin, "Cheep, chirrup, tweet, twitter!"

My boot at the bird
I flung—cried, "Interred
Shall you be in a pie beneath thin dough!"
But my aim was but vain—
The boot broke a pane,
And the robin flew out of the window!

A SENSIBLE LOVER.

I NEVER—never did desire
A maiden blest with "eyes of fire;"
Because such flaming things mayhap
Might singe, if not consume, a chap.

I never did a liking show
For maid whose "bosom was of snow;"
Because frost-bitten one might be,
From hugging such a girl as she.

The maid with lips "like cherries ripe"
Has never been my passion's type;—

Because, when autumn time had come,
You'd have to pick 'em—which is rum !

Nor is the maid, who boasts a cheek
“Just like a peach,” the one I seek :—
I never—be the truth revealed—
Enjoy a peach that isn't peeled.

The maid whose brow is “ivory white”
Would never give my heart delight :
Although it's good for paper-knives,
I don't like ivory in wives.

One taste I with the poets share—
I like a maid “with golden hair ;”—
But would she let me—deuce is in't !—
Shave it, and send it to the Mint !

My notion of a girl is this—
A girl that one may hug and kiss ;
No ivory, or gold, or snow,
Or fire, or peach, or cherry !—No !
But just a girl—as girls now go.





BETTER AS IT IS.

MY love, you might be beauty's queen ;
A form to which the world would bow,
A grace unchangingly serene
Might elevate your spotless brow.

You want the empire beauty gains ;
You think it would be very sweet
For crowds of eligible swains
To fall enraptured at your feet :
But true attachment's never bribed ;
And *my* regard for you is such
That, were you all that I've described,
I shouldn't love you half as much.

You long for brilliancy of wit,
You long to "flash" in speech, like me
(I *do* possess, I must admit,
An aptitude for repartee) ;
You'd like accomplishments, my dear,
To charm society, and shine ;
Enrapturing the eye and ear
With gifts remarkable as mine,
But recollect, my darling, when
You *had* such magic in your touch,
You'd "cut me out," perhaps, and *then*
I shouldn't love you half so much !

I asked you once to be my bride—
I asked no vain, affected dunce :
You hadn't any silly pride,
But said : " Oh, certainly ! " at once,
We might have married any day,
But I was not a splendid " catch ; "
And so your pa, I'm glad to say,
At once objected to the match.
My wife ? I really do not care
To think of you as being such—
Moreover, darling, if you *were*,
I shouldn't love you half so much !





BUBBLES.



H, when I was a little lad—
No care my moments to absorb—
It was the greatest joy I had
To launch the saponaceous orb,
But now the load of manhood's troubles
Makes me heave sighs, and not blow bubbles !

Yet Manhood has its hollow gauds,
And blows and puffs to make them bigger :
While each observant friend applauds,
Although he cuts an antic figure—
His chin's adorned by manly stubble,
Yet, like a child, he blows his bubble !

Then, ah, my friend, be warned by me—
Abjure a pipe—or only smoke one !
Let speculative soapsuds be,
For Fortune's joy is to provoke one ;
And she for that her tricks redoubles
If she can catch one blowing bubbles.

To purse your lips up ne'er begin,
To swell the fine prismatic globe ;
For when 'tis with inflation thin,
A breath will pierce it like a probe,
And you, as smarting eyes you rub, 'll
Exclaim, " Confound that bursted bubble."



A CURIOUS TASTE.

I'VE met a Russian Prince, and he
Preferred "long sixes" for his tea :
I've also known an Esquimaux
Who of raw vitriol loved his "go :"

I've likewise seen a party, whose
Delight it was to bet—and lose :
Moreover, I have heard of men
Who like to go to bed at ten :

Besides, there are some folks alive ,
Who say they love to rise at five :
And there are some who doat on Tupper :
And some love pickled eels for supper :

Others a predilection show
For tea composed of birch and sloe :
And some express a downright wish
To have train oil as sauce with fish.

But there's an individual yet
Whom, I confess, I never met :
That man—outside of Bedlam's walls—
Who takes delight in Morning Calls.



NIGHT THOUGHTS.

“**H**OW beautiful is night,” as Southey said,
In Thalaba ; but ah ! how sad for me,
A hecatomb is slain beneath my tread,
Where late the chirping cricket carolled free.

I know a bank, or rather know a grate
Blackbeetles haunt ; a crapping, crawling clan,
There hold they revels, or in high debate
Proclaim aloud how mean a thing is man.

I bait my traps, huge bowls of foamy stout,
With ladders made of firewood for ascent ;
They enter in, they drink, and then get out,
Deriding me in drunken merriment.

They watch me on my entrance, and I know,
Some tricks preparing by the dread I feel,
I seek my boots at morning-tide, and lo !
I find a wanderer lurking in my heel.

I sit with nervous terrors in my chair,
I know a wretch is crawling to my knee,
My meals are few—but all my meals they share,
And wanton in my little store of tea.

They rule supreme around me, and they bring
The lively crickets in ;—'tis vain to think
Of any writing when those crickets sing,
And one old beetle's bathing in my ink.

So things go on, until my latest day
I ne'er can hope from beetles black to part,
As Mary talked of Calais—so I say,
“Blackbeetles” will be graven on my heart.



THE COUNTRY.

BY A MEMBER OF THE CORPORATION.

YOU bid me to the country here, to see
The season's changes in the world organic.
But 'stead of Nature's livery give me
The Aldermanic !

Worship in Nature's temple mayn't be bad,
But though the sentimentalist may wheedle,
I own I see the hills in verdure clad—
But where's the Beadle ?

What feasts like Birch's can the country yield ?
Horses, 'tis true—so poets have expressed it—
Devour the plain ; but you can't eat a field.
E'en when you've dressed it !

The lamb's uncooked, the mint in selfsame plight,
 The whole of Nature's rawness becomes *my* sore
 The lark, undressed, may rise—but then his flight
 Is but a high-soar.

Drink of the purling stream? Why, only look
 Into the wave, and 'twill ensure your shunning
 A draught in future. Of the running brook
 None drinks twice running!

For newts, eftsoons, and tadpoles you will spy,
 And big black water-beetles, awful stunners!
 Such sable swimmers suit me not, though I
 Like scarlet-runners.

The midnight sky to praise here nought debars;
 But I love light—lamps so conduce to *bonhommie*,
 And when one dines late, what's the use of stars?
 Give me *gastronomy*!



A COMPLIMENT.

“**I** WOULD I were a bird,”
 Sang Chloe's liquid voice;
 Which when the poet heard,
 Said he, “Not such my choice!
 ‘I would that I might be
 A smile’ would that eclipse:
 For I should be, you see,
 For ever on your lips!”



THE FLIGHT OF A ROCKET.

BY A MEDITATIVE BARD.

I SAW it soar into the vault of night,
Eclipsing all the splendour of the stars,
A roaring rushing serpentine of light—
A very comet, ruddier than Mars.

And then it burst and shed a shower of fire,
Golden and crimson, purple, green, and blue,
Which, slow descending, slowly did expire—
When lo ! another radiance upward flew !

Another rush ! Another glittering trail !
Another rain of scintillating sparks !
And as their evanescent glories fail,
A third resplendence cleaves the upper dark.

And thus, I said, upon this busy earth,
First gleams, then glooms, the fate of noble deeds
A death illustrious—an illustrious birth—
One date for both :—so worth to worth succeeds

Alas, the new blots out the older star,
Too soon the memory of greatness goes—
But when my meditations reached thus far
A rocket stick descended on my nose.



GLEAMS OF WHITE.

WRE those the sails of a galley
That evermore one sees,
Adown the bosky valley,
Among embowering trees?

Or are they swans that hover
Above some lake's still rest,
Because they can discover
Their image on its breast?

Or are they lambkins snowy
That sport beside their dams?
(Which means, in language showy,
The mothers of the lambs).

Or are they orchards blooming
With silvery wealth of flowers,
And promised fruit, presuming
They 'scape frost's cruel powers.

Or are they—where's my eyeglass?
I have it! They are—bosh!
They are—reveals my spy-glass—
That everlasting wash!



THE SONG.

IN the garden lay a lute
Where some careless hand had flung it,
One who saw it lying mute,
Took it up and strung it—
Made a song of flowers and fruit—
Made a song and sung it.


All the winds were hushed to hear,
All the garden silent round him,—
All the songbirds that were near
By his music found him.
Said the monarch with a sneer,
“Bother and confound him.”

Myrmidons what court doth lack?
Twenty creatures quickly sped off,
Caught our poet in a crack,
Where his strain he led off—
Laid the lute about his back—
Took and cut his head off.

Why thus off his head they cut—
What the rhymes were he was stringing—
Why the King upon his nut
Was such curses bringing—
These I know not, knowing but
That he left off singing!



THE CONSOLING PIPE.

 HE heathen god Pan
Was a good-looking man,
But unluckily cursed with the legs of a goat ;
Which made Syrinx look down
Upon Pan with a frown—
And on Syrinx, it was, he was fated to doat.

He was pining away—
Grew thinner each day—
But small consolation from Syrinx he got.
And her sneers at his legs
So embittered the dregs
Of life's cup ; it was clear Pan was going to pot.

One morning he grew
So pressing, she flew
To Minerva, or some one, to help her in need ;
And, obtaining her change,
In a manner most strange,
Rushed into the water and turned to a reed.

On seeing which, Pan,
Like a sensible man,
Just cut her at once—and invented the pipe :
Which ever since then
Is by all jilted men
Held the best cure for love —of which smoke is the type.



W H Y?

I WILL not sing to thee to-night,
My song would be in vain :
And yet 'twould give my soul delight
To breathe a tender strain.

Why should I sing a loving lay ?
Why tune the minstrel's lyre ?
'Twere throwing melody away,
A thing I don't admire.

Why should I sing a song in vain ?
Thou would'st not note my song.
And in that case it's very plain
To sing to thee were wrong :

Indeed, I should but seem bereft
Of sense to carol thus,
Because you're deaf, love, and you left
Your trumpet in the 'bus.





THE DELIGHTS OF FICTION.

BY AN OLD BOY.

FICTION may be a sort of food
For young digestions far from good ;
So sweet but wrong, like ice !
In childhood I ne'er found it fail,
But monkey-like, devoured my tale,
And thought it very nice.

I studied closely night and day,
And even did some hours of play
To Lemprière devote.
My faith in all I read was quick—
Excepting on "Arithmetic"
Which one Colenso wrote.

Then Mercury, with feathered heels
New-lit, as classic lore reveals,
On heaven-kissing hill,
Was Messenger divine, and Thief
To all Olympus—not the chief
Ingredient of blue pill.

Then Hercules a hero seemed,
Such mighty tasks he had, I deemed,
 To right such lots of wrong,
He scarce was strong enough ! I vow
For my weak faith he proves just now
 A little bit too strong !

I thought Jove thundered, then, on high :
I know, now, he's a thundering—why,
 He never *did* exist !
And as for Venus ! She and Mars
Are only planets, bless their stars !
 And never lived and kissed.

For knowledge came ! It cost a sigh !
Proved Polyphemus all his eye—
 A mere blind, to be brief ;
And next at great Orion dealt
So fierce a blow below the belt
 It staggered my belief.

So now I've given Fables up,
And turn to Truth's dry Bitter Cup,
 And envy boyhood's fate :
Indeed, I'm in so sad a plight
I've turned to Fact from Fiction quite,
And half believe Colenso's right
 That five and three *are* eight.





WHAT IS IT AILS THE LADY CLARE?

WHAT is it ails the Lady Clare,
That such disgust her face expresses?
Have they not come to do her hair,
Or have they failed to bring her dresses?
Has Bessie burnt the crayon sketch—
That page's head, she oft has fished for?
Or has Miss Smith, "the odious wretch,"
Secured the opera-box she wished for?

It is not that—it is not this,
'Tis not the former or the latter,
But yet there's something gone amiss,
There's something certainly the matter.
She's looking vexed, she's looking hurt,
Note round her mouth the twitching muscles,
Her dainty boot beneath the skirt
Is tapping angrily the Brussels.

A note lies on the Davenport,
The note she has begun to write to
Dear Isabel, to say what sort,
Of bail it was she went last night to.

Well! since we wish to learn th' events,
We shall not a terrific sin do
If we just glance at the contents
While she is looking out of window.

"Last night, dear Bella, was *the* ball,
And *he*, you know,—*a certain person*—
Danced *all* the evening long—yes, *all*!!—
With that *great gawky*, Jane M'Pherson!
You know her—with a *shapeless* waist,
Red elbows, *not one decent* feature.
I really *wonder* at his taste (!)
In taking up with *such a creature*!!

"Their conduct *really* was the talk
Of *all* the room :—'twas *simply heinous*.
An hour, *at least*, they took a walk
In what *she* calls, of course, a *green 'us*!
At supper time *what must* he do
But in *a quiet corner* pack her?
I saw her give him mottoes, too,—
How forward!—from a bon-bon cracker!

"I *cannot* say how I am *hurt*!
I'm *really* getting *ill* from *fretting*!!
What *right* had he like that to *flirt*?
He never *heard* of *my* coquetting!
Of course he always *is* polite,
But why with such *marked preference* treat her?
I'm sure *you'll* say it isn't *right*,
I *vow* I think that I could *eat her*!!

"I've always heard that *men* are *false*!
Mere *butterflies*—cold heartless *friskers*!
But if you'd *only* seen him *waltz*—
And then he had such *lovely* whiskers!

Oh, I'm *so* wretched—in *despair*!!
I *hardly know* what I'm about, dear!!!
Good bye!

Yours *ever fondly*,

CLARE.

P.S.—High wreaths are *going out*, dear."

Thus with a frown my Lady Clare
Is gazing from the lofty casement.
What is it she beholdeth there,
To cause such anger and amazement?
She sees young Edward down below—
She sees him eagerly converse on
The other side the street—and oh!—
It's with that odious Jane M'Pherson.





BY THE SAD SEA WAVES.

IT'S all very nice by the waves of the ocean,
To wander a-wooing—but then to be frank,
I prefer a young lady who has not a notion
Of hunting sea-monsters and filling a tank.
My Mary out rambling,
O'er rocks will go scrambling,
While I follow, shambling
Along with a net—
A basket and bottle—
(A burden that's not ill),
Though the weather is hot till
Quite weary I get.

You can't say soft things while you're having a scramble
Over rocks, where one needs the cleft hoof like an elk—
Or offer your heart with a tender preamble,
To a lady who cries, "What a beautiful wheelk!"—
Oh! I'm weary of dredges—
And beaches and ledges,
Of rocks with sharp edges,
Wet weeds and all that;
Of hunting and grabbing
And shrimping and crabbing—
Of all fishing, dabbing
Is sure the most flat.

I've gone quite knee-deep in the waters to "shrimp it,"
 Been stung by a jelly-fish, nipt by a crab ;
I've slipt upon sea-weed and sat on a limpet,
 And slid on my face down a slippery slab.
 Oh ! would that my Mary, a
 Little would vary, a
 Taste for Aquaria
 With science more *dry* ;
 For of jumping and skipping
 Over rocks wet and dripping,
 From constantly slipping,
 Quite weary am I.

To know that the season's soon over, I'm thankful,
 I shall leave the sea-side without any regrets,
Though I humbly fear she will take back a tank-full
 Of beasts of the ocean to keep as her pets.
 Oh ! picture me kneeling,
 My passion revealing,
 In language most feeling
 And praying relief—
 The hand, which mine presses
 And softly caresses,
 She withdraws—to feed "messes"
 With bits of raw beef !





*PRÆRAPHAELITE RHYMES TO A PICTURE OF
MY NATIVE SEA-PORT.*

(PAINTED AND PRESENTED TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY.)

HAIL! thou scene of memories sainted,
Deeply printed in my heart ;—
And in water-colours painted
By a lady!—Dear thou art !

Here, in childhood's free emotion,
Did I ramble o'er the rocks,
Wreath'd my brow with spoils of ocean,
Hurt my knees, and spoilt my frocks.

Oft in yonder cove, that nestles
Round the corner of the coast,
(Where you see the fishing-vessels
Lying bottom-uppermost).

There, secure from all invasions,
Have I wept my little woes—
As, for instance, on occasions
When the sand had filled my shoes !

Lo ! the Sun, among the daughters
Of the sea, his chariot cools,—
Gilds the glassy-looking waters—
Gilds the looking-glassy pools !

And the sunset sea is placid
With its foam-line, long and straight,
Fizzing like Tartaric acid
Mixed with Soda's carbonate.

Sail the vessels outward, toiling
Round the headland crown'd with flame :—
And the vessels, home-recoiling,*
Also toil around the same.

Smooth the sea as any dish is,
Not a whisper—ne'er a sound,
Save the leap of playful fishes—
Weighing often several pound !

(Not that fishes leap in pictures,
But in that real scene they used,—
So don't pass ungentle strictures,
Saying that I get confused).

When I left thee I was older,
Whisker-fringed my cheeks had grown,
But my heart no whit was colder
Toward thee—native sea-port town !

As from out thy bay I floated,
Proudly on the deck I trod,
Of a little bark, devoted
To the fishery of cod.

* "*Recoil*", to rush back ; to return ; to come or go back."
—JOHNSON.

And it bore me to the steamer,
Which has landed me I wis—
All too soon—an idle dreamer—
In this great metropolis !

From whose tumult toil and scrimmage
Gladly I for peace would fly,
Fondly gazing on thine image
Land of my nativity.—

Ah, old sea-port ! now thy sight is
Even dearer to me grown,
Since I've had this dread Bronchitis
In my lonely rooms in town !





ALL IN THE DOWNS.

BY A BRONCHITAL BACHELOR.

“With the blue above, and the blue below !”—THE SEA.

I WOULD I had something to do, or to think,
Or something to read, or to write,—
I am rapidly verging on lunacy's brink,
Or else shall be dead before night !

In my ears there's been ringing and droning all day,
Without ever a stop or a change,
That poem of Tennyson's—"heart-stirring lay"—
Of the moated monotonous Grange.

They say, if some number you count and re-count,
That the time imperceptibly goes ;—
Ah, I wish—how I wish—I'd ne'er known the amount
Of my aggregate fingers and toes !

“Enjoyment is fleeting,” the proverbs all say,
“Even that which it feeds upon fails.”
I've arrived at the truth of the saying to-day
By devouring the whole of my nails.

I have numbered the moments, so heavy and slow,
But of *that* dissipation I tire ;—
And as for exciting amusements,—you know
One can't *always* be poking the fire !



THE NAME OF TERROR.

“ The magic effect of Rollissons’ Cantharikopho upon all such vermin as Cockroaches, Beetles, &c., is marvellous.”—*Vide papers.*

SAID the Cockroach to the Beetle,
“ Pray you, read this scrap of paper,
Where it says that this to eat’ll
Soon produce our final caper—
Canthariko-
Pho !
Foe
To all of our tribe, you must know ! ”

As the word that Cockroach uttered,
He fell lifeless, with a bounce.
“ This must rise,” the Beetle muttered,
“ From attempting to pronounce
Canthariko-
Pho !
Oh,
It makes me feel very so-so ! ”

And that Beetle’s babes next second
Were left orphans, tearful-eyed ;
For grim Death had simply beckoned,
And the Beetle went and died.

Canthariko-
Pho !
No
Rival to that can you show !
Go !
Dose all the vermin with Canthariko-
Pho !
Ho ! ho !



A HOLIDAY TRIP.

AN ECHO.

“ **T** GAZE upon a city ”
 (Though maybe it's a town),
 Whereon to write a ditty,
 To send you, I sit down,
To paint its quays and bridges,
 Its dandies and its belles,
Its sands and pebble-ridges,
 Its sights and—oh ! its smells.
 For though we're on one planet,
 We're parted by Old Nep ;
And you, dear, are in Thanet,
 While I am at Dieppe !

Its people all look happy,
The workmen clad in blue,
The women old and cappy,
The maidens cappy too !
E'en shop-folks (in a measure,
Like dentists, you will say)
In windows with much pleasure
Their ivories display.

Yes, though we're on one planet,
We're parted by Old Nep ;
For you, dear, are in Thanet,
While I am at Dieppe.

And all outside their houses
At eve, when work is o'er,
They sit, with bairns and spouses,
In groups about the door.
There resting from their labours
They take their cigarette,
And chat with passing neighbours—
A most Arcadian set.

Ah, though we're on one planet,
Thus parted by Old Nep ;
Would you could come from Thanet,
To see me at Dieppe.

Outside some *café* swell you
Should sit with me and feast,
And break the bread they sell you—
Loaves three feet long at least !
A fact I would, my treasure,
To British bakers state—
Bread's sold here by long measure
Instead of by short weight.

Alas, though on one planet,
We're parted by Old Nep ;
You still inhabit Thanet,
While I am at Dieppe.

Here, wooden shoes keep clacking,
And tongues are clacking too,
And noisy whips keep cracking,
And life's a gay to-do.
Each horse has bells that jingle,
To cheer him on his way ;
You hear the tingle-tingle
Around you all the day.

Ah, though we're on one planet,
Yet parted by Old Nep—
You can't hear things in Thanet
Which I do at Dieppe.

We've fountains and old buildings,
A statue in the square,
Small kiosques, with paints and gildings,
And lodgings everywhere.
Such roses ! And such salads !
But now I drop my pen—
There must come ends to ballads,
And Prudence cries out " When ? "

So, though we're on one planet,
Yet parted by Old Nep,
You'll soon receive in Thanet
These verses from Dieppe.



AD COR MEUM.

IE'VE toiled together, you and I,
Through hot and cold, through wet and dry,
These years, twice twenty.
And you seem weary of the work
And I, although I'm not a shirk,
Have had just plenty.

Well, I must credit you with this,—
You seldom say that aught's amiss,
While I am pumping
The copy out apace, but then,
As soon as I lay by the pen,
You set up thumping !

It's not exactly what you ought,
Considering the time we've fought
The fight together :—
But I'll admit that you know best,
And if you'd rather thump than rest,
I will not blether !

Although, I own, you sometimes keep
Me wide awake when I would sleep,
And take in fuel ;
Don't think I would objection name
To any privilege you claim—
I'm not so cruel.

For me, so far, with kindly zest
You always have performed your best—
 And I *have* tried you ;
Nor could I—let me clearly state—
With anything co-operate,
 Were I denied you !

But don't you think, 'twixt me and you,
That we've done all we ought to do ?
 We've worn life's gleam off,
We've spent our youth, we're past our prime,
And somehow it seems almost time
 To shut the steam off.

Here, on the sofa, let's recline—
I hear you now, oh heart of mine,
 Beat with persistence !
Why toil so fiercely—pray you, stop
These palpitations wild ! Let's drop
 Out of existence !





A KINGLY CAREER.

WERE I but monarch for a day—
For just one day—of these dominions,
I'd make reforms in such a way,
That there could be no two opinions !
I'd do away with party strife,
Whip Liberal hounds off Tory haunches ;
And prune with an unsparing knife
Each Government Department's branches.

The poor should be employed and paid,
The workhouse be a home for beadles,
And all the slopsellers be made
To find their workers food—and needles !
Reviewers all should speak the truth,
And pen and ink be locked from fools ;
And Government should find our youth
At once in playgrounds and in schools.

Lawyers should really earn their fees,
And doctors keep us well—not ill ;
And those, who liked, should have their teas,
And those, who liked, their beer should swill ;
And all religions should be viewed
With rev'rence, tolerance, and fairness ;
And Bigotry should ne'er intrude,
And Charity should lose its rareness.

I'd teach each man in that one day
To fear his God and love his neighbour,
I'd all abuses sweep away ;
And when night came, to end my labour,
And I once more, for great and small,
The Golden Age's dance had led off—
Should not feel surprised at all
If they turned round and cut my head off!





REFLECTIONS ON WATER.

NOT much in childhood, it is true,
Clear element, I courted you,
For purpose of ablution.
I held not (touching hands and face),
“That dirt is matter out of place.”
A question worth solution.

Yet, though I did not care to dip,
I loved you ! For I swam my ship
Upon your bosom gaily.
You'd frogs and tadpoles too : I felt
That they were meant for boys to pelt—
And you'd the tribe call'd scaly.

How oft, intent on roach and dace,
Beside you have I ta'en my place,
Your finny public vexing
With lines :—not such as now I spin ;
They ended in a crooked pin,
And not a rhyme perplexing.

How often did I peer and gaze,
And search your depths for water-fays,
In ripple and in dimple :
'Till fancy painted what I wished,
And I beheld them, as I fished
With gentle, being simple.

How oft with friends and playmates too,
I've watched the tiny, impish crew
 Among the flag-roots glide in.
We saw them, those aquatic elves,
As plainly as we saw ourselves
 Reversed the glassy tide in.

Alas ! now I am older grown,
My childhood's quick belief has flown,
 Worn out in worldly scrimmage;
Reflection's altered for the worse,
And hints at many a sad reverse,
 More strange than watery image.


Sunshine has given place to shade,
My pleasant prospects quickly fade—
 Each day they're getting duller.
Life's landscape darkens. E'en my views
On water lose their early hues—
 Though done in water-colour.

The element becomes, I vow,
An element of discord now !
 "Soft water !" What is harder ?
It is a thing oft wets my cheek—
A thing that makes my spirits weak—
 A thing that damps my ardour—

A thing for which I have to pay
On every other quarter day,
 (There's nothing to console in
The thought that if you're in arrear
They'll cut it off)—a thing, oh, dear !—
 A thing to make a hole in !



TIRED.

 HE swift can't always win the race—
The strong the battle gain :
For last and pluck there's still a place,
And still a chance, 'tis plain !
The prize which we all aim at, still
Remains to be acquired.
Ah, well ! let those contest, who will ;
For, somehow, I am tired.

Perchance, too soon I pressed the pace,
O'ertrustful of my strength ;
At any rate, I find the race
Fatigues me by its length.
I still seem near the starting post,
I left with ardour fired ;
Let others run and do their most,
For, somehow, I am tired.

The prize that looked so rich and rare,
When I was young and strong,
Seems nothing now ! My only care
Is still to push along,
And gain—no ! not the prize that I
At starting so admired—
'Tis but the goal for which I sigh,
For, somehow, I am tired !

The friends, who started at my side,
Far, far ahead have pressed ;
Some won renown, and some (who died)
That first of prizes—rest !
I envy not that fame they reap,
To which I once aspired—
I only wish I were asleep,
For, somehow, I am tired !

Once dreamt I, I should spurn the sod
On Pegasus, mayhap !
But woke to find I had to plod
Round weary lap on lap.
Well let at last a graven plank
Record the end desired—
“ He who lies here to slumber sank,
For, somehow, he was tired ! ”





FORD THE FIREMAN,

WHO SAVED SIX LIVES, AND LOST HIS OWN, AT A FIRE IN
THE GRAY'S INN ROAD, ON SATURDAY, THE 7TH OF
OCTOBER, 1871.

HY glints the autumn sun on glittering helms?
Why the Dead March, with its funeral beat?
Why this vast crowd, whose silence overwhelms
The roaring of the street?

The marching column has a martial air;
Its tramp is timed like tread of well-trained troop;
Is it some famous Captain that they bear
To where the dark yews droop?

A common man!—a fireman!—what, no more?
Why tears? Why sobs? Why grief on every face,
As though it were some hero that ye bore
To his last resting-place?

Not always, true, are purest laurels won
Amid red carnage in fierce battle's strife,
But earned by humble duty, bravely done,
In saving human life!

This *was* a hero ! Yet he never strove
To win distinction for his simple name ;
His way through flame and stifling smoke he clove
For duty—not for fame !

With single purpose acted he his part,
Conscious of living in his Maker's ken ;
And well the lesson had he learnt by heart
Of Him, Who died for men.

'Twas so *he* died ! From out a fiery grave
He snatched the helpless, weak with wild despair ;
Then, in his wonted work's performance, gave—
Freely—his life for theirs !

Before that plain deal coffin, bow the head !
That land's secure which may such heroes boast ;
Write Joseph Ford among the honoured dead,
Whom England prizes most !





BEHIND THE MASK.

BING up the curtain for the play,
The audience is agog for mirth.
Now, Master Actor, show to-day
Of laughter-moving wit no dearth.
What, sick and sorry ! Luckless elf,
Swallow your pill—'tis all we ask !
Keep your wry-faces to yourself
Behind the mask.

What, ho ! a song—a merry stave !
Truce to each melancholy note.
The company a carol crave—
Let's have no sobbing in the throat.
Let music sparkle as champagne
Bursts bubbling when you broach the flask ;
And, prythee, all your gloom retain
Behind the mask !

Bring forth the wine, oh good mine host !
And bring it with a merry smile,
Such as befits your jovial post,
And greet us with a jest the while.
What—cloudy brows ! As well you may
Make your wine muddy—shake the cask.
Tut, fellow ! Hide your care away
Behind the mask.

Come, Beauty, lay aside the veil,
Nor hide those cherry cheeks from day—
Those lips, by which the rose seems pale,
Are lips where smiles should ever play.
Lift the long fringes of the lid
That we in sun-warm looks may bask !
What—tears ! Nay, girl, they best were hid
Behind the mask !

So wags the world ! And so men make
A paradise for Self therein :
No matter though a heart may break
With sorrow, suffering, or sin.
Poor slaves, who feel in every nerve
The horror of the hated task,
Fate must your recompense reserve
Behind the mask !



HARD HITS.

IF you play at Life's bowls, you must e'en be content
With hard rubs now and then in the course of the
game.

If you put on the gloves with the world, you consent
To take such smart blows as are lucky in aim.
Let this hint, then, before you begin be conveyed—
You'll the worst knocks receive (pray believe an expert),

From the friends you have always endeavoured to aid,
And the foes you have never attempted to hurt !

Since the times of the Jews all the children of men
Have been very much given to stoning each other !
It's fun shying stones at a fellow ; and then
It's the best fun of all if the fellow's your brother.
And this as a rule down at once may be laid,
You'll get most of your pelting with pebbles and dirt,
From the friends you have always endeavoured to aid,
And the foes you have never attempted to hurt !

So keep up your courage, and don't be cast down,
Or expect Nature's rules to be altered for you.
And the toughest of armour's a smile—not a frown—
Since through that they can't wound you whatever they do !
For my part, my cheerful philosophy's made
Me always my powers of forgiveness exert
For the friends one has always endeavoured to aid,
And the foes one has never attempted to hurt !





THE LESSON OF THE LIFE-BOAT.

The life-boat Huddersfield, stationed at "Hasborough," Norfolk, and the Grocers' life-boat, at Mundesley, on the same coast, both of which boats belong to the National Life-boat Institution, were happily the means, on Christmas day, during bitterly cold weather and in a heavy sea, of saving the lives of thirteen men, from the wrecked brig "Minerva," of Seaham, and Schooner "Flora," of Margate.



H, Christmas Day
Is blithe and gay,
While loving-cups we're pouring,
And while we quaff
We sing and laugh,
And the great Yule-log is roaring.

When kith and kin
All gather in
Around the fire together,
And quite forget
The cold and wet,
The snow, and frosty weather.

But Christmas Day,
Far—far away
Beside the ocean hoary,
On England's coast
May fairly boast
A purer, higher glory.

When heav'n was black
With flying wrack
And high the waves were dashing,
Far o'er the tide
The boatman spied
A cannon's fitful flashing.

And well they knew
A hapless crew—
To sure destruction drifting
Mid breakers' roar—
For aid from shore
Were piteous prayers uplifting.

Through sleet and spray,
Away—away!
They launch the Life-boat boldly,
Though billows vast
O'ertop the mast,
And icy winds blow coldly.

At risk of life,
A noble strife
While gale and billow waging,
The storm they braved—
The crew they saved
From baffled ocean's raging.

Think, landsmen, then,
We boast brave men
Who will with courage steady
Do deeds like these—
Where'er you please
To have the Life-boat ready!



A NOVEMBER NIGHT.



COLD November night : the sky
Is full of fiery falling stars,
That seam the silent depths on high
With red and blue and purple scars.

A night that men shall often name
Hereafter, when o'erhead they saw
The fleeting brilliance flare and flame,
While nature stood a-gaze in awe.

But some with feelings deeper far
Record this night, of all the years,
Which marks the quenching of a star,
That gleams—and glides—and disappears.





LOSING AND WINNING.

IT never would be right
Comparisons to lack :
We should not know a white
Without the aid of black ;
Then here, please, stick a pin,
And own how just my views !—
For nobody could win,
If some one didn't lose !

You never value wealth
Unless you have been poor ;
Enjoyment of good health
Can bad alone ensure ;
The silence after din
A deeper calm endues
And nobody could win,
If some one didn't lose !

'Tis from the gloom of night
That day its brightness steals ;
And 'tis the mountain's height
The valley's depths reveals ;
And virtue out of sin.
Doth worth to life infuse ;
And nobody could win,
If some one didn't lose !

The argument is just,
The moral very clear ;—
But somehow drop I must
A small remark in here ;—
That surely Satan grins
To see how each one chooses
To be the one who wins,
And not the one who loses !

*IN A HUNDRED YEARS.*

N extra smile or a burst of tears—
A fine to-day or a dull to-morrow—
A bit more joy or a drop more sorrow—
All the same in a hundred years.

A thousand hopes or a thousand fears—
A lifetime sad or a lifetime wasted—
A cup drained empty or left untasted—
All the same in a hundred years.

If things were thus, as one often hears,
I'd seize the pleasure, I'd leave the sorrow—
Enjoy to-day and defy to-morrow—
All the same in a hundred years.



A COMPROMISE.

WHEN pleasures die and hopes collapse,
When cares are neither small nor few,
"To grin and bear it," is, perhaps,
The proper sort of thing to do.
I face Fortuna's bitter frown ;
I know repining is a sin.
When Disappointment knocks me down,
I bear it—but I cannot grin.

I've had my losses—who has not ?—
In love and money, heart and purse,
Though discontented with my lot,
I feel there must be many worse.
I've met behaviour less than kind,
From people that were more than kin ;
I say " No matter ; never mind,"
I bear it—but I cannot grin.

No, no ; the wise ones of the earth
May tell me never to despair—
May bid me with a mask of mirth
Conceal the ravages of care.
No, rather let the gloom without
Show something of the blank within.
When Fate keeps pushing me about
I bear it—but I cannot grin.



GOING TO PIECES.

NOTE this apple tree, gnarly and green,
Where wealth of lichen and moss increases,
Many the years it has stood I ween ;—
Now it is quietly going to pieces.
Ah, but the hues—gold, purple, and grey—
As you view its colours from various places ;
Call it ripeness, or call it decay,
This ancient ruin is full of graces.

Scathed by the levin, flung to the ground,
Prey to the mighty North Easter falling,
Little of beauty it then had found,
Save where the ivy o'erspread its palling,
Better the fate that the tree will crave,
Crusted with moss, and with lichen fretted—
Going to pieces, to sleep in a grave,
Sown with kind memories, long regretted.

So may Heav'n around my old age
Tender friendship and love entwining,
All the cares of its close assuage,
While tow'rd the grave are my steps declining.
When o'er my heart the death-chills steal,
Ere the poor jester for aye deceases,
Grant, gracious Power, my heart may feel
I go to peace, when I go to pieces.



FONS BANDUSIÆ.

LEARNER than crystal—Bandusian spring,
Worthy of goblets of flower-crowned wine ;
Hither to-morrow a kid will I bring,
Bring as a gift to these waters of thine.

Flower of the flock—the young wanton in vain,
Ere horns on his brow are beginning to bud,
Plans the wars he shall wage, and the love he shall gain,
For to-morrow your waves shall be red with his blood,

The Dog-star when fiercest it rages on high,
Can never touch thee—a cool draught to the ox,
Wearied with ploughing, your waters supply,
And streams cool as ice to the wandering flocks.

You shall be first 'mid the springs of renown ;
The oak will I sing that hangs over thy head,
From under whose roots thy sweet waters flow down,
With laughter and song o'er the rocks in thy bed.





A TARDY TRIBUTE.

IN MEMORIAM W. J. P.

YOU pass, dear friend, into the land of peace ;
Your footprints fade upon the silent shore,
Where Life's importunate complainings cease
For evermore !

Too soon you leave us—who have worked with you,
Cheerful in heart, these many weary years—
Lacking your presence, to begin anew
Our toil, in tears.

We miss your noble words, bent o'er our task ;
In leisure times we miss your sunny song :
We walk beneath a dull grey sky, and ask,
“O, Lord, how long ?”

Struck dumb with sorrow at your early fall,
We with that utterance first relieve our pain,
Remembering well—as you have told as all—
We meet again !

Dear friend, forgive, then, that Love made no signs
Of vocal grief till now beside your grave ;
That tears—more eloquent than these poor lines—
Were all I gave !



TRUE SEEMETH FALSE.

A BALLAD.



YOUNG knight came in a goodly bark,
'Tis twice twelve months ago ;
With cruel art he won my heart,
Alas ! it should be so !

He wore a jewelled spur on heel,
A coat of cramoisie,
And a golden horn, in a baldric borne,
And he came wooing me !

His breath was sweet as new-mown hay,
He gave me kisses two.
“ Be the bride-feast laid,” said he, “ sweet maid,
For I wed with none but thee ! ”

I gave my heart, I gave my soul,
So dear he was to me !
Alas ! and woe, that it should be so !
For his babe lies at my knee.

But the bonnie bark ! the bitter bark !
It sailed away from shore.
He cried, “ Farewell ! my Bonnibel,
Until two months be o'er ! ”

But now six times two months are fled,
And still he stays away :
I watch the track that brings him back
The whole long weary day !

And all the night I watch the stars,
In the pauses of the rain ;
But the nights, alas ! and the days they pass,
But he comes not again !

Thus, hour by hour, in lonely bower,
That lady sits and sighs ;
But where wild waves roar on a barren shore,
Her shipwreck'd lover lies.

The seaweed-tress is in his hair,
The sea-foam on his cheek,
His listless hand is filled with sand,
The grey gulls o'er him shriek !

When through the vessel's yawning sides,
The raging waters came,
The last, last breath he drew in death,
It shaped that lady's name !





A VERDICT.

IN this world of mistakes and mishaps and misdeeds—
And the misses distinctly outnumber the hits!—
Where Justice so often at random proceeds,
She condemns twenty guiltless for one she acquits ;
We must feel we have more than our portion of bliss
If our life when reviewed has the luck to obtain
From the jury a verdict no harder than this—
Of “Not Guilty. But warned not to do it again !”

We strive and we struggle—we err and we fail—
We’re anxious to soar, but we roll in the mire ;
We swear we will fight against fate, and prevail,
But we strike a few blows and, incontinent, tire.
Our life is a constant succession of falls
And struggles to rise that are hopeless and vain :
So ’tis well if for no sterner verdict it calls—
Than “Not Guilty. But warned not to do it again !”





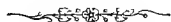
TWO MINUTES AGO!

TWO minutes ago—and the river slid
 'Twixt its flowering banks, as blue as Heaven,
The water-hen swam from her nest, reed-hid,
 With her yellow brood of seven.
The rushes they whispered a whisper soft,
 And the waterfall tinkled down below ;
The sky was one blaze of sapphire aloft—
 Only two minutes ago !

Two minutes ago—the lark was up,
 Twinkling a star 'twixt earth and sky ;
Like wine overflowed from a silver cup,
 Rained the sweet notes from on high.
The flowers in the meadows nodded for glee
 That only the Zephyrs should gently blow :
The world had ne'er looked so lovely to me—
 Only two minutes ago !


Two minutes ago—while the lark still soared,
 And the sky was blue, and the streamlet ran
To the waterfall, over the ledges poured,
 For me new life began !
A whispered question, breathed in your ear,
 And a murmured answer, so soft and low,
That my beating heart would scarce let me hear—
 Only two minutes ago !

Two minutes ago !—Well, the lark may drop,
The sky may darken, the flowers may die,
The musical brooklet for ever stop,—
So be it—What care I ?
A few drops of happiness spared may be
From a cup that is brimmed to its overflow ;
For there's something more in this world for me
Than there was two minutes ago !



L I N E S.

BY A LOVER OF THE PICTURESQUE.

ILVER stars on a golden sheen,
Glimmer of flowers in a tender rain,
Sighs for a future that might have been,
Smiles for a bygone pain.

Passionate longings, spoken tears,
Whispering boughs in a sullen noon,
A lifelong sorrow growing with years,
Frowns of a tropic moon.

Moanings of eld in shadowy pines,
Haunting pictures on silent wall ;
And about a dozen nonsensical lines
Writ about nothing at all !



FAREWELL FOR EVER!


WHEN earth becomes a living tomb,
And mirth for ever flies the heart—
When day becomes an endless gloom—
When love from love must part;
How sad the thought of each lost day!
How vain to strive the joy—the bliss
Of those dear moments, dead for aye,
To sum in one last kiss!

When sighs steal all that we would speak—
And eyes for tears can nothing tell—
When hearts first learn what 'tis to break—
When love bids love farewell;
Of all deep sorrows of true hearts
The crowning anguish sure is this,—
When love from love in silence parts
With “one, long, lingering kiss!”





THE SONG IN THE CITY.

HE rainy mist was hanging low,
Creeping slow,
Creeping along the crowded street,
Dulling the echo of busy feet,
As the throngs passed by in a ceaseless flow,
Hastening, hurrying to and fro.
Overhead was a sky of lead,
Never a glimpse of blue to be seen ;
Never a gleam the clouds between,
And my heart sank low with a causeless dread ;
And thoughts of the morrow,
Its care and sorrow,
And the toil for daily bread,
Filled my breast with a wild misgiving—
“ Without a friend to love or pity,
All alone in this crowded city,
Where was the use of living ? ”

Trill—trill—trill,
The song of a lark
Scattered the visions dreary and dark,
And woke my heart with a thrill.
Poor little lark, in its tiny prison,
It chanted its sweet song over and over,

As if it were only newly risen,
From the fields of emerald wheat and clover ;
And the notes came pouring,
Heavenward soaring,
 Up—up—up,
 As if the cup
Of its happiness was overflowing,
Out on the hills with a fresh breeze blowing,
And the sky to eastward redly glowing,
In the bright green country far away,
At the morn of a sunny summer day.


Sorrow vanished—
Gloom was banished—
Forgotten the misty dreary weather—
And long leagues off where the corn was green,
Up in the sunlight's golden sheen,
My heart and the lark were mounting together—
 High—high—high,
 In the bright blue sky.
 Trill—trill—trill,
 And cheerily still
The lark in the midst of the busy city,
Over and over sang its ditty—
Raising my soul like some holy beatitude—
So with all gratitude,
Blessing the bird for its merry song,
Chastened and cheered, I hastened along.





WITH A BRACELET.

(SENT FROM ABROAD.)

AKE, dearest one, this golden band
And clasp it round thine arm for me,
Who fain would link with mine own hand
This token of my love to thee.

Oh ! may thy pulse beneath it beat
One measured rythm with thy heart—
Beat quick with joy, love, when we meet ;
And only slowly when we part.

And may thy moments far from pain,
All imaged by this trinket be—
Links, dearest, of a golden chain,
Beads in a golden rosary.





*THE SONG OF THE SAILOR-LAD, WHO
GOES AWAY TO SEA.*



H, push along ! the tide is strong,
The storm has passed away,
The goodly ship, with anchor a-trip,
Is tossing in the bay.
Then farewell, mother ; farewell, dad ;
Farewell, my sisters three ;
Oh, Good Luck you wish your sailor-lad,
Who goes away to sea !

Our jolly crew is staunch and true,
Our ship is taut and sound,—
We'll spread our sail before the gale
Wherever we are bound ;
And be the weather fine or bad,
I know you'll think of me,
And Good Luck you'll wish your sailor-lad,
Who goes away to sea !

Come weal or woe, come friend or foe,
Be death or danger nigh,
I'll think of when great Nelson's men
Were just as young as I ;

And how, whate'er the work they had,
They toiled with hearty glee ;
So Good Luck will wait the sailor-lad,
Who goes away to sea !

Away, away, through surf and spray,
For, see, the signal flies ! ·
Good-bye, good-bye ! but, dear ones, dry
The tear-drops from your eyes ;
And do not let your hearts be sad,
If e'er you think of me ;
For Good Luck is with the sailor-lad,
Who goes away to sea !





A LIFE OF FLOWERS.

A PLEA FOR CHRISTMAS MEDITATION.

“There’s rue for you ; and here’s some for me. . . . You may wear
your rue with a difference.”—*Hamlet*.

EE—on the cold damp flags,
Wheresoever my lady flits—
A flower-girl, huddled up in her rags,
Fallen asleep where she sits !
Well may your ladyship stop,
The sight has a wild, weird charm—
Look in the basket ready to drop
Down from the listless arm.

Violets—under the gas !—
Faded, flaccid, and dead,
O’erblown roses waning,—alas !
Lilies hanging the head ;—
Seeming meet types of her face,
Haggard with hunger and care ;
Just the wrecks of girlhood and grace
Drifting—who can tell where ?

Worn with the weary walking of hours,
Penniless, pitiful slave—
See, she sleeps, unconscious of flowers,
As if they grew over her grave !

There—in the cold and damp,
There—in the drizzle and blast,
What does she care for the flare of the lamp?
Is it not rest—come at last!

If it were only so deep,
Hunger disturbed not its dreams!
Over her there in her sleep,
See, as the sickly light gleams,
Hollow and pallid her cheek—
Hers, who lies starkly below :
But round, rosy-tinted, and sleek,
Hers—gazing down on her now !

Near ;—yet how far apart !
View them, oh, pitying Powers,—
Each with her tender woman's heart,
Each with her life of flowers :
Flowers—strewn in one's happy path,
Garlands for waist and for head :—
Tell me what to the other, I pray !
Things not for beauty but bread !

Flowers, that the poets have sung,
Flowers, that the west wind has wooed,
Flowers, that the bees have been busy among,
Hummed round, and hymned-to, and sued,—
Flowers—e'en those commonest sweets
Nature to earth does entrust !
Yet—to this hapless waif of the streets,
Meaning simply—a crust !

Well, you may snatch back your dress,
Lady, lest contact defile,
Yet may the heavens your loveliness bless,
Just for that womanly smile :
Sorrowful ! Go—get you in,
Sit down and sigh for despair :
What can we do for a world full of sin,
Suffering, sorrow, and care !

Under the flaring lamp,
Out in the midnight street,
Where the air is stilly, chilly, and damp,
Look at the two, how they meet !
How many meet so—and part—
Here in this world of ours,
Each with her tender woman's heart,
Each with her life of flowers ?





INK.

I'M tender-hearted truly :
 Destroy a worm? Not I !
I would not e'en unduly
 Compel a flea to fly.
And yet without compunction,
 I could—I gravely think—
That man destroy, with unction,
 Who first invented ink !

It stains my weary fingers,
 It spoils my Sunday clo's,
And through my dreams it lingers
 To banish true repose.
Mandragora nor poppy
 Can win for me a wink ;—
That man invented "Copy,"
 Who first invented ink.

'Tis well for those, at grey light,
 Who douse the midnight ile,
But I from dusk till daylight
 Must shed ink's fluid vile.

I straight to bottom dive must,
They never quit the brink ;—
Not much in Heav'n he thrive must
Who first invented ink.


And just when toil is over,
And on my sofa flat
I lie as if in clover,
I hear the post's rat-tat.
And Jobkins sends me verses,
And Bobkins writes for chink ;—
On him then fall my curses
Who first invented ink.

The average inventor
Is mostly known to fame,
But Maunder (who's my mentor)
Does not record *one* name—
And I'm for one contented
To see in Lethe sink
His name, who first invented
That hateful fluid—ink !





NIGHT WINDS AND NIGHT THOUGHTS.

HEY sigh about my casement,
And through the trees o'erhead,
They come and go—solemn and slow,
Stealing the voice of the dead,
The dreary winds of night.

They left the pall
Of the cedars tall,
That round the mansions droop,
And the sturdy oak,
As to Woodman's stroke,
At their mighty breath must stoop ;
And the whole night long,
To their ancient song,
With its mystic, mournful rhyme,
Now deep, now shrill,
With a wild, weird thrill,
The bending bows keep time.

They moan and wail
To the midnight gale,
Those kings of the forest old,
And shake at his feet,
An offering meet
In their showers of autumn gold.

As down the old avenue clad in his might,
He sweeps in his song—the cold wind of the night.

And so my heart is shaken
When the voices of the past,
With their memories awaken,
And the showering tears fall fast—
Through wakeful hours of night.

They lift the veil,
And my spirits quail
At the bygone years' review,
For the heart, too strong—
For life to wrong,
The dead Past can subdue.

My tears fall fast,—
Like the leaves in the blast
At the year's sad close,—and low
I bow my head
To that vision dread,
As the trees when the night winds blow.
And I pray for the light that will scatter in flight
The thoughts that are waked by the wind of the night.





STANZAS.

SWEET Death,
If you do love me, as I think you do,
Come as the sun comes when he drinks the dew,
And suck my breath.

No tears
Should mar our union who have been betrothed
So long—so long. Ah, me ! how I have loathed
These twenty years.

No scar
Be left by Pain, the shroud will fail to hide ;
There should the face of a so-willing bride
Be nought to mar.

One kiss,
Cold—cold ! because such fever fills my heart,
And in that kiss we meet, no more to part,
Oh restful bliss !





HOW?

HOW shall I tell her I love her?
How shall I hope to move her
To pity—love's twin brother?
Shall I fall at her feet in the forest,

In the forest's green musical arches,
Where the oaks, and the elms, and the larches,
Twine their arms round one another
Like lovers fond and tender?
Shall I fall at her feet in the forest,
'Mid the evening's golden splendour,
And say, "If thou hat'st or abhorrest,
I love thee—but if thou art kinder,
Not refusing my love, then thou pourest
New life through my veins? I'll remind her
Of the smiles and the welcoming glances
That have sunned the poor bud in my breast,
Till its frail petals, opening daily,
Grew brighter and stronger and gaily,
Defied all the cold wintry chances,
And bloomed into love in its rest.
Ah, no!—she would turn from me coldly;
Would leave me in scorn in the forest,
Stepping stately aside; with the coldest of smiles
She would sweep in her beauty along the green aisles,

With the rays of the sun flecking goldly
On her raven hair and her flowing dress.
O God ! of all human unhappiness
To be scorned for our love is the sorest.

.

NIGHT floated downward to the earth and furl'd
Her dusky pinions o'er the drowsy world,
As sinks at eve the dove into her nest,
And hides her tender brood with downy breast.

.

Through solemn aisles of old majestic trees,
The diapasons of the midnight breeze
Like sacred music 'neath cathedral roof,
Trembled—and died—and echoed far aloof ;
Cloudless the sky—no fleecy wreaths were driven
Across the deep serenity of heaven.
While the pale moon, night's gleaming silver lamp
Stole slow and silent through the starry camp,
And strangely fair in light and shadow blue
Stood pier and buttress—tower and battlement ;
While far away amid the moonlit meads
Old Isis whispered to his nodding reeds,
And his low murmur to the aching sense
But made the seeming stillness more intense.

.

When sudden peals the charm of silence broke,
The sleeping tongues of spire and tower awoke
Loud, too, they all with varied cadence meet,
Deep-toned—or slowly swung—or silver sweet,
With hollow notes they roused the sleeping dells.

.



STANZAS.

WHEN we were at school together, Jack,
There was down on neither's cheek.
Now, if we look back along our track,
Which has gained what he would seek ?
The woman you loved is lying
In a churchyard far away—
And the sunset, so swiftly dying,
Seems to you the best of the day.

My picture is in the Academy, Jack,
And they've hung it on the line,
And critics, good lack, discern a knack
Most rare in this daub of mine ;
But the eyes I desired should see it,
And the lips whose praise I'd prize,
Have passed from this world ! so be it—
I love when the daylight dies.

For I see over roof and chimney, Jack,
The gold in the western sky—
Though the present's black as a stormy wrack,
The time of release draws nigh.
For peace will be won when life is done,
Beyond the gloom lies the gold ;
To us the hour of the setting sun
Has a charm it lacked of old.



OBIIT AD PLURES.

PUT by the cage, dear! one more link
Is lost us from the chains that shrink
So sadly soon, year after year!
Now human love unfolds its wings
And leaves us—and now humbler things
Are lost, that helped to make life dear.

'Tis but a tiny bird, indeed,
That lies there 'mid the wasted seed,—
But ah, 'tis one song's sunshine fled
That was to us a sound of home ;
And though a myriad songsters roam,
Our one small welcome guest is dead.

Among the roses, that will shed
Their snow and blood above its bed,
Come, let us scoop a little grave.
Our sweetest flowers where it lies
Shall whisper of the tropic skies
That were its home beyond the wave !

So let it sleep ! and we? we wait
For what shall be beyond The Gate,
Where our own loved shall glad our eyes—
We know it—*we* are sure to meet,
But, when the long—long lost we greet,
Say will there be a fresh surprise ?



AT NIGHT.

WIND, that drivest sleet and rain
Loud against my lonely pane ;
Night-wind, roaring through the trees,
Like the sound of far-off seas ;—
On the strand though wrecked I lie,
Do not pass me heedless by,
Hear my cry !
Softly blow
Where she lies low,
My dead darling, in the snow.

True ! I know that she is where
Not e'en *my* grief gives her care :—
That the grave, o'er which I weep,
Can her ashes only keep—
Yet I—who almost adore
The least trinket that she wore—
Feel it sore
Thou should'st blow
Where she lies low,
My dead darling, in the snow.

When the Spring shall bring again,
Sunshine's smiles, and tears of rain,
Blossoms thou shalt o'er her shed
From the chestnut overhead ;
Then, the sounds that with thee stray
Shall seem *her* voice—far away :—

Now, I pray,
Softly blow
Where she lies low,
My dead darling, in the snow.



THE TWILIGHTS.



NE twilight there is, ere begins, grim and murky,
The night of oblivion, when no man may work :
If this be the twilight that holds us its slaves,
Let its lurid up flame light us down to our graves.
We have wasted the day and neglected the task,
'Tis vain for unmerited mercy to ask,
No—cowards and faithless let's slink to our graves—
We deserve this last twilight to which we are slaves.

But twilight there is ere the morning appears,
As the sun rises slowly the mist vapour clears.
If this be the twilight that o'er us holds sway,
Then hail the grey twilight that ushers in day.
We have toiled, and still toil, pressing on toward the
light,
Not long shall the twilight o'ershadow our right—
No—strivers and workers, we'll chase it away—
This dark prophet twilight that ushers in day.

Dark, silent, uncertain, dim twilight and grey !
Shall we let it still linger or drive it away ?
Shall it herald oblivion, sloth, slumber, and night,
Or the day of new life—broader freedom—pure light.
Shall it linger and cling—like an evil old cause,
Or give place, as old wrongs, to new rights and free laws?
Soon the time will arrive for our choice—Brothers—say,
After twilight so long will ye choose night or day ?





DYING LOVE.

WHEN earth becomes a living tomb,
And mirth for ever flies the heart ;
When day becomes an endless gloom,—
When love from love must part ;
How wild the grief of that last day !
How vain to strive the thoughts—the bliss
Of happy moments, dead for aye,
To sum in one last kiss !

When sighs steal all that we would speak,
And eyes, for tears, can nothing tell,
When hearts first learn what 'tis to break,—
When love bids love farewell ;
Of all deep sorrows of true hearts
The crowning anguish sure is this.
When love from love in silence parts
With one long lingering kiss !

.
We hear the cuckoo far away
Go wandering through the wood,
As we heard it many years ago
When in this place we stood—

As then the daisies shed the grass—
The trees burst into bud,
Green grow the arches overhead
And green the mirror flood,
 Under the chestnut boughs !

Ay, many, many years ago
We heard the cuckoo's tones,
And saw the branches overhead
Waving their snowy cones—
Ah, many, many years ago
Our daughter's tiny hand
Was clasped in ours—when here we stood,
Where now alone we stand,
 Under the chestnut boughs !

The silver flecks your hair, my wife,
The wrinkles mark my brow,
But Age can touch our hearts no more
Than it can touch her now.
So many, many years ago !
And yet our love's the same—
But grief has vanished into hope
And we can breathe her name
 Under the chestnut boughs !





A GATHERED BUD.

SPRING cometh over wood and wold,
And fills the world with glee,
The primrose opes its paly gold,
The violet's on the lea—
Spring cometh merry as of old,
But comes in vain to me !

For when in Autumn's slow decline
They reaped the rustling grain,
And pressed the gushing grapes to wine,
By cruel blight was ta'en
A tender blossom, half divine—
It will not bloom again.

When winter chained the gliding wave
My heart's life-torrent froze—
Alas, e'en love was vain to save,
And in the winter snows
We hollowed out a tiny grave
Wherein to lay our Rose.

Yet God is good—His will be done !
He gave, He takes away.
Then cease, sad heart, to sigh and moan ;
Be patient, wait and pray !
He gives, He takes ! nor that alone—
He will give back some day.



IF!

XH, dearest, if our tears were shed
Only for our beloved—dead ;
Although our life's left incomplete,
Tears would not be so bitter, sweet,
As now !—ah ! no.

Ah, dearest, if the friends who die
Alone were those who make us sigh ;
Although life's current is so fleet,
Sighs would not be so weary, sweet,
As now !—ah ! no.

If oft more pain it did not give
To know that our beloved live,
Than learn their hearts have ceased to beat,
Grief would not be so hopeless, sweet,
As now !—ah ! no.





THE WIDOW AND THE FATHERLESS.

“HOPING AGAINST HOPE.”

“**Y**ES, I am waiting here, mother, with no company
but my boy's,
I could not sit by the mouth of the pit, and
hearken the hollow noise
Of the strokes of the pick and the crowbar as they toiled
away below
To rescue the men—and my husband, he is living still, I
know.
It was only last night I saw him as I drowsed away by the
fire,
Up there in the engine-house yonder—for at last I began
to tire ;
And, as I was nodding, I fancied that some one came to
the door—
'Twas he—he looked at me smiling—and passed away—
and no more !
But I know by his smile he is happy—do you think he'd
be happy, dear,
If he'd left you, little Charlie, and your mother lonely
here ?
Look up, my child ! He'll be coming : God will send him
back again,
For how could we two poor things get on, if that our good
man was ta'en ?

“ But I could not sit within sound of the pit—it almost
drove me mad ;
For I counted—and counted—and counted the blows of
the busy pick and the gad ;
And as easily could I reckon and sum my best blood by
drops,
As measure his life by those random blows, with the fre-
quent pauses and stops.
When with sullen sound the treacherous ground in the
shaft side fell away,
And the work was all to begin afresh—and 'tis near a week
to-day !
Look—tell me ! Does any one come from the pit?—for
my eyes are weak with tears !
A neighbour has promised to carry to me the first news
from the shaft that he hears ;
‘ Yet,’ he said, ‘ there was little hope for them now ! ’—but
I did not heed what he said ;
For they cannot be dead—they cannot be dead—O God !
he cannot be dead !

“ There is no one coming ? Well, well, we must wait—but
oh, 'tis a weary tryst,
And at times there's a doubt that whispers my heart—a
doubt I can scarce resist ;
But I look into little Charlie's face, and under my breath
I pray—
And whisper myself, ‘ The Lord is good—He gives—He
takes away ! ’
But He will not take the father away, and leave only the
child and me
To wander the wide world through alone. It cannot—it
will not be !

O mother ! it was but few weeks ago we pitied the Queen
of the land

For a loss that we now come near to know—for a grief we
now understand !

But there's One Friend still Who will listen when the
widow and fatherless call—

O wives and children, neighbours of mine, God have
mercy on us all !

“ Is any one coming—can you see? What, no one—and
now so late !

O mother, mother ! the heart grows sick that has for so
long to wait.

Yet—oh, when I see my husband, and look in his face
again—

For he *is* alive—I shall be repaid for this moment's years
of pain ;

And they'll not be bitter, the plenteous tears that when he
comes I shall shed—

For he cannot be dead—he cannot be dead—O God ! he
cannot be dead !

“ Is any one coming? Look again—is not some one there
by the gate?

I fancied there was. How cold it grows—and it's getting
late, ah, late !

Why, mother, you know this very month we've been mar-
ried ten years long—

We have suffered together, and struggled at times—but it
only made love more strong.

And he was as true a husband to me as woman ever has
seen—

‘ He *was*,’ do I say? He is living still. He *is* a true
husband, I mean !

And while I was ill, when Charlie was born, how gently
he nursed me then—
How strange it is that the strength of love makes such
tender nurses of men!
And I used to lie and listen while from out of the Book he
read—
Oh, he cannot be dead—he cannot be dead—O God! he
cannot be dead!


“Surely there’s some one coming, look! You can see
from where you stand!
At last is there some one coming this way? Little Charlie,
give me your hand;
Come close to my side! Can you see, mother?—can you
see? Is there only one?
Is he hastening, mother, to where we are? Is he hurrying
here? Does he run?
What! walking so slow! Ah, well we know ’tis ill news
travels apace!
Hush! hush! don’t tell me of tears on his cheeks, and a
grave sad look on his face,
Or else I shall always hear in your voice, till my dying
day, the tone
Of the one that first told me I was left alone in the world
—alone!

“‘Dead!—dead!—dead!’ Like molten lead the words
burn into my brain,
And into my heart, till every part is wrung with the mighty
pain!

Had I only seen him alive once more—only heard his
parting breath—
Had he only lain in my arms once more to pass into those
of death,—
Had I closed his eyes as the life-light died, I had been
more reconciled.
Is he dead? Is he dead? Oh, can he be dead? God
help me and the child !”



KING COLD.

REAT King Cold
Is a warrior old :
He rules over the realms of snow ;
He is marching forth
From his lair in the North,—
You can hear his clarion blow,
Where the keen wind pipes o'er the frozen seas
And the dead and shrouded wold ;
And the banner he flings to the icy breeze
Is the yellow fog-wreath's fold.
He is coming great King Cold !

He has come where the foes are met,
Before the starved and leagured town.
His flag in the frosty ground is set,
And he flings his ringing gauntlet down.

And he laughs, the great King Cold,
At the French and German nations :
As he cries " Your fathers in the days of old
Lacked much of your civilisations.
For when my trumpet blew,
And when my banner flew,
From camp and leaguer, watch and fray,
For winter they withdrew.
They would not stay
For me to slay
As I now am slaying you ! "

And so in the hours of frost and dark,
He deals his bitter blows,
And side by side, so stiff and stark,
Sink down both friends and foes—
The coward and the bold !
'Tis his joy to strike
At all alike
That grim old chief—King Cold.





THE KING OF BRENTFORD.

A HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO NATURALISE ONE OF OUR NUMEROUS
FRENCH REFUGEES—LE ROI D'YVETOT.

GR^{EAT} Brentford once a king possessed
(He's not in History written),
He got up late, went soon to rest,
And slept, by fame unbitten.
His brows no golden circlet bore,
A cotton nightcap—nothing more—
He wore !
Oh ho, ho, ho ! Ah, how absurd !
A pretty monarch on my word—
My word !

He, in his palace, built of mud,
Through four meals daily scrambled.
Upon an ass of no rare blood
His kingdom through he ambled.
His faith was cheerful, simple, sound—
His trustiest body-guard he found
A hound.
Oh, ho, ho, ho ! Ah, how absurd !
A pretty monarch on my word—
My word !

Extravagance was not his bent,
Though he'd a chronic dryness ;
Yet since he gave them all content,
None grudged drink to His Highness.
He no exciseman kept, I wot,
But levied on each cask—and got—
A pot.
Oh ho, ho, ho ! Ah, how absurd !
A pretty monarch on my word—
My word !

To Beauty he was never blind,
Although no more a laddie.
He was so fatherly and kind
His subjects called him “ Daddy.”
His troops, ne'er sent to warfare stark,
Had oft in shooting at a mark
A lark !
Oh ho, ho, ho ! Ah, how absurd !
A pretty monarch on my word—
My word !

This good man ne'er from neighbour-state
Annexed a contribution,
A model he to rulers great,
Made mirth his Constitution.
His subjects' eyes—unused to swim
With tears—*first*, when they buried him,
Grew dim !
Oh ho, ho, ho ! Ah, how absurd !
A pretty monarch on my word—
My word !

Of this old king of pure renown
The portrait is preserved now.
As tavern-sign in Brentford town
For ages it has served now.
On holidays from far and near
The folks come there and swig their beer,
And cheer !
Oh ho, ho, ho ! Ah, how absurd !
A pretty monarch on my word—
My word !



A CONTENTED MIND.

IF I was not compelled for my living to toil,
If food, drink, and clothes were produced by the soil,
If ready-cooked dinners were borne on the gales,
And rivers of Allsopp flowed free through the vales,
If we all lived in caves in a primitive way,
I could live and be happy on twopence a day—
Twopence a day—
Twopence a day—
I could live like a prince upon twopence a day.

If I never was called on for taxes or rates,
And no paupers existed to burden our States,
If one never was called on to aid a poor brother,
And all in the world, one as rich as another ;

Oh, if nothing at all I were called on to pay,
I could live and be happy on twopence a day—

Twopence a day—

Twopence a day—

I'd be kind to the poor upon twopence a day.

If the world had returned to the Season of Gold,
When nought could be bought because nothing is sold,
When the harvest spontaneously sprang from the ground,
And mutton and beef cost but no-pence a pound,
When beer's nothing a quart and you bring your own jugs,
And gold, bank-notes, copper, and silver are drugs—
I think that I really may venture to say
I could save something handsome on twopence a day.

Twopence a day—

Twopence a day—

I should prove quite a Rothschild on twopence a day





THE BILLS.

SEE the Members with their bills,
Private bills,
What a world of promises their bringing-in fulfils ;
How they jostle one another,
And compete for vacant nights,
How they pant, and gasp, and smother,
Pushed aside by party fights.
While their movers, standing by,
Emit a doleful cry,
Apprehensive of the destiny that ultimately kills
Their bills, bills, bills, bills,
Bills, bills, bills,
The dismal fate in keeping for their bills.

See the silly annual bills,
Foolish bills,
With what deluded hopefulness their introduction fills
All their friends throughout the land,
Who can never understand
That the House will throw them out
One by one ;
That though the movers shout
At a Speaker who is dozing while they spout,
When they've done,

With patience sorely tried,
But with a gush of thankfulness the Members will divide,
And decide
To deride
The foolish annual bills :
And the lesson each instils
Is, that clearly these are merely
Futile bills, bills, bills,
Bills, bills, bills, bills,
Bills, bills, bills,
Never to be anything but bills.

See the Ministerial bills,
Burly bills,
With what prolonged expectancy their introduction thrills !
Through the country far and wide,
Their friends exult with pride ;
Too much horrified to speak,
Their opponents only shriek
In affright,
In a clamorous appealing to the wisdom of the House—
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic House.
They declare the bills a chouse,
And affirm they will, by *nous*,
Rouse the country now or never,
By a resolute endeavour
To resist the pale-faced Premier
With his bills, bills, bills,
While each party-leader drills
For the fight
His forces great or small,
To enfranchise or enthrall
The country on the great division night ;

And the public hardly knows,
 'Mid the wrangling
 And the jangling,
How the danger ebbs and flows,
 But each newspaper instils
 Into readers,
 By its leaders,
 All its own views of the bills,—
Its own views of the pestilent or patriotic bills,
 Of the bills, bills, bills, bills,
 Bills, bills, bills,
The stupendous and tremendous public bills.

 See the sickly autumn bills,
 Dying bills,
What a flood of penitence each moralist distils
 From their slow but sure decay,
 As the session wears away,
From the melancholy lesson that they teach ;
 For every dying scheme
 Is in its turn the theme
 Of a speech,
 And is tediously debated,
 Until hopelessly belated,
 Overthrown,
And its mover prosing, prosing
 In a muffled monotone,
Feels a glory in disclosing
 All its merits little known.
In the spring he moves the bills,
And clears his voice and swills
From a tumbler set beside him,
While his enemies deride him,

And his friends cry out, "Hear, hear,"
And he wins a feeble cheer.
 Now and then
 Only, when
With brows knit in a frown,
His arm sways up and down,
 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the moving of the bills :
 Of the bills,
To the solemn exposition of the bills :
 Till at last the daylight lengthens,
 And the summer sunshine strengthens,
 And finally it grills
 The Members in their places,
 So sadly, with long faces,
They consent to slay their bills,
 To abandon all their bills ;
 All their bills, bills, bills,
 To massacre their bills,
Though sorely 'gainst their wills,
And each bereaved one fills
The House with lamentations o'er his bills,
With sorrow at the slaughter of his bills :
 Of his bills, bills, bills, bills,
 Bills, bills, bills,
With sorrow at the slaughter of his bills





MAY WE NE'ER WANT A FRIEND.

A NEW VERSION.

Addressed to the Shade of Dibdin.

SINCE the first dawn of reason on—Dibdin—your
mind,
Very little experience, it seems, that you got :
If you—after your fortune was shared—did not find
That those you had shared it with, wanted you not !
It's a maxim of mine, if a friend you'd sift out
From the crowd, do not test with too searching a sieve
him :
And this motto you then may adopt past a doubt—
“I shall not want a friend, while I've lots I can give
him !”

But a grateful return of a farthing per cent.,
When by poverty bowed, don't expect in the least :
With the fact, that you've proved you're an ass, be content—
And we all know content is as good as a feast ;
Yet it makes one a little inclined to dispraise,
To know from experience, as sure as you live, you
Of this motto the truth will learn, some of these days,
“ May you ne'er want a friend—for no jot'll he give you !”



THE CANNIBAL FLEA.

IT was many and many a year ago,
In a District styled E.C.,
That a monster dwelt whom I came to know
By the name of Cannibal Flea ;
And the brute was possessed with no other thought
Than to live—and to live on me !

I was in bed, and he was in bed,
In the District named E.C.,
When first in his thirst so accurst he burst
Upon me, the Cannibal Flea !
With a bite, that felt as if some one had driven
A bayonet into me !

And this was the reason why long ago,
In that District called E.C.,
I tumbled out of my bed, willing
To capture the Cannibal Flea,
Who all the night, until morning came,
Kept boring away at me !
It wore me down to a skeleton
In the District hight E.C.

From the hour that I sought my bed—eleven—
Till daylight he tortured me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know
In that District named E.C.)
I so often jumped out of my bed by night,
Willing the killing of Cannibal Flea.

But his hops they were longer by far than the hops
Of creatures much larger than he—
Of parties more long-legged than he ;
And neither the powder, nor turpentine drops,
Nor the persons engaged by me,
Were so clever as ever to stop me the hop
Of the terrible Cannibal Flea.

For at night with a scream I am waked from my dream
By the terrible Cannibal Flea,
And at morn I ne'er rise without bites—of such size!—
From the terrible Cannibal Flea,
So I am forced to decide I'll no longer reside
In the District—the District—where he doth abide,
The locality known as E.C.—
That is postally known as E.C. !





THE FOINTSMAN'S PLEA.

OLD, and weary, and worn,
I sit in my lonely shed
From morn till night, or from night till morn,
Till the hours of my watch are sped :
And the wage they grant for the work's so scant,
It barely will buy me bread.

The year about, week in, out—
No holiday I can boast.
In cold or heat, in rain or drought,
I am here at my cheerless post,
Where the eye and brain, with a ceaseless strain,
Are taxed to do their most.

What horrors would death unmask
Should a train through their failure swerve !
Oh, well a duty like this may task
Quick brain and iron nerve.
Are seventeen shillings a week, I ask,
All the wages these deserve ?

Yet, since brain and limb grow numb,
However much I may try ;
You scarce can wonder if accidents come—
So overworked am I,
And so poorly fed—for 'tis little but bread
A pittance like mine can buy !

And I—I am old and grey,
My eyesight is growing dim.
'Tis labour for younger men, you say,
Younger in sense and limb.
But a younger man would not take my pay—
Though work may be scarce with him !

So for fifteen weary hours
I my ceaseless watch must keep,
A vigil that taxes all my powers :
And I stare aghast at sleep—
Should I close, mayhap, my eyes for a nap,
How many more eyes may weep !

Such monotonous toils amid,
The o'erstrained spirits reels ;
And all unbid to my aching lid
Unconsciously slumber steals—
'Till I'm roused from my dream by the engine's scream,
And the throb of the hurrying wheels !

And the innocent blood is shed !
But where must the cause be sought ?
For that moment's error on my low head
Be punishment justly brought :
But shall they go free who share with me
The guilt of the deed I wrought ?

A cold and heartless crew,
Shall they the sentence shun,
Who still their selfish gains pursue,
Unheeding the risk they run,
Setting *one* to do the work of *two*—
For less than a wage for one ?

Who gamble in human lives
To win them a greater fee,
Who trust your mothers, and children, and wives,
To a wretch infirm like me,
That their dividend at the twelvemonth's end
At such cost increased may be.

Of the curses on me bestowed,
Let them, too, have their share,
Who sacrifice lives to a miserly code
That bids them pinch and pare,
And on flesh and blood lay a heavier load
Than flesh and blood can bear.





POETS AND LINNETS.

BY R*E*RT BR*WN*NG.

HERE'ER there's a thistle to feed a linnet—
And linnets are plenty, thistles rife—
Or an acorn-cup to catch dewdrops in it,
There's ample promise of further life.
Now, mark how we begin it.

For linnets will follow, if linnets are minded,
As blows the white-feather parachute ;
And ships will reel by the tempest blinded—
Ay, ships, and shiploads of men to boot !
How deep whole fleets you'll find hid.


And we blow the thistle-down hither and thither,
Forgetful of linnets, and men, and God.
The dew !—for its want an oak will wither—
By the dull hoof into the dust is trod,
And then who strikes the cithar ?

But thistles were only for donkeys intended,
And that donkeys are common enough is clear.
And that drop ! What a vessel it might have befriended !
Does it add any favour to Glugabib's beer ?
Well, there's my musing ended.



THE TEA.

BY CARRY BORNWALL.

HE tea ! The tea ! The beef, beef-tea !
The brew from gravy-beef for me !
Without a doubt, as I'll be bound,
The best for an invalid 'tis found ;
It's better than gruel ; with sago vies ;
Or with the cradled babe's supplies.

I like beef-tea ! I like beef-tea,
I'm satisfied, and aye shall be,
With the brew I love, with the brew I know,
And take it wheresoe'er I go.
If the price should rise, or meat be cheap,
No matter ! I'll to beef-tea keep.

I love—oh, how I love to guide
The strong beef-tea to its place inside,
When round and round you stir the spoon,
Or whistle thereon to cool it soon.
Because one knoweth, or ought to know,
That things get cool whereon you blow.

I never have drunk the dull souchong,
But I for my loved beef-tea did long,
And inly yearned for that bountiful zest,
Like a bird : as a child on that I messed—
And a mother it was and is to me,
For I was weaned on the beef—beef-tea !



LINES TO MY UMBRELLA.

X H ! what is that companion dumb
That autumn, winter, spring, or sum-
Mer I should always have? My um-
Berella !

But ah ! too oft when showers come,
What is't, as Yankee says, "at hum"
That I have left behind? My um-
Berella !

What does too oft a loan become
To friends whose honesty is numb?
(Friendship meets no return). My um-
Berella !

Henceforth, then, foul or fair, by gum !
Whether or no they hoist the drum,
I'll never part from thee, my um-
Berella !

Henceforth, too, I'll my latest crumb,
My latest drop, my fortune's sum,
Give to my friend—but not my um-
Berella !



A FEW MUDDLED METAPHORS.

BY A MOORE-OSE MELODIST.



H, ever thus, from childhood's hour,
I've seen my fondest hopes recede !
I never loved a tree or flow'r
That didn't trump its partner's lead.

I never nursed a dear gazelle,
To glad me with its dappled hide,
But, when it came to know me well,
It fell upon the buttered side.

I never taught a cockatoo
To whistle comic songs profound,
But, just when "Jolly Dogs" it knew,
It failed for ninepence in the pound.

I never reared a walrus-cub
In my aquarium to plunge,
But, when it learnt to love its tub,
It placidly threw up the sponge !

I never strove a metaphor
To every bosom home to bring,
But—just as it had reached the door—
It went and cut a pigeon's-wing !

